Some Aspects of
SOCIAL LIFE
During
THE MUGHAL AGE
(1526—1707)

PRAN NATH CHOPRA

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By

PRAN NATH CHOPRA

Foreword by

HUMAYUN KABIR

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TO

MY FATHER

K. C. CHOPRA

FOREWORD

I have read with interest Dr. P. N. Chopra's study on *Social Life during the Mughal Age*. He is a careful scholar who has used original sources to give an interesting account of the life of the Court and the nobility as well as the common man. He describes in considerable detail customs and habits of both Muslims and Hindus and throws light on many curious points of conduct and behaviour in early modern India.

What immediately strikes one in Dr. Chopra's account is the continuity of Indian traditions and habits. The description he has given of Hindu society would with minor changes hold for ancient times as well as the early twentieth century. The same thing applies to his account of Muslim institutions and customs. It is only in the last quarter of a century that old social forms and institutions have started to change on a massive scale, but even today old habits of thought and action linger in almost every sphere of life. Dr. Chopra's book will be useful not only to scholars interested in the past but also to students of contemporary social affairs by indicating elements in our rich and composite heritage that have stood the test of time and deserve to be preserved.

12 February, 1963 ***Humayun Kabir***

PREFACE

Fifteen years ago I planned to make an objective study of the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the Mughal period in 5 volumes. "*Some Aspects of Society and Culture during the Mughal Age*", the first volume in the series, was published in 1956, its second and revised edition was brought out in March, 1963. The present work, which forms the second volume in the series, is based on a careful study of accounts of foreign travellers and other contemporary sources in Persian, Hindi and Sanskrit. The third volume entitled "*Literature during the Mughal Age*" is in the press. I intend to bring out two more volumes to present a comprehensive view of the Mughal society.

I am grateful to Prof. Humayun Kabir, Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs, for sparing his valuable time to go through the manuscript and to write a Foreword to the book.

I also take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Dr. R. C. Majumdar for the encouragement and inspiration I have received from him ever since I came into contact with him in 1953. Dr. A. L. Srivastava has guided and helped me all along and in fact it was at his suggestion that I first undertook a study of the cultural aspects of Mughal India. My thanks are due to Mr. L. G. Parab of the Archaeological Library and to the authorities of the National Archives of India for their unfailing courtesy and unstinted help. My friends, Mr. A. I. Tirmizi, Dr. Dharm Pal and Prof. B. R. Grover, offered useful suggestions for the improvement of the book. Miss Madhuri and S. Kamal Chopra assisted me in the preparation of the Index.

P. N. Chopra

New Delhi,
August 15, 1963

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ain.—*Ain-i-Akbari* by Abul Fazl, Vol. I, English translation by H. Blochmann (1873) ; Revised by D. C. Phillott (1939). Vols. II and III by Col. H. S. Jarrett, 2nd Edition, by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, 1948 and 1949.

A.N.—*Akbarnama* by Abul Fazl, Edited by Agha Ahmad Ali and Abd Ali Rahim (Bib-Ind.). English translation by H. Beveridge.

Amal-i-Salih—*Amal-i-Salih* (Bibliotheca-Indica) by Muhammad Salih Kambu.

Aspects of Bengali Society—*Aspects of Bengali Society from Old Bengali Literature* by T. C. Das Gupta.

B.N.—*Babarnama*, English translation by A. S. Beveridge.

Badauni—Abdul Qadir Badauni's *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*. Edited by M. Ahmad Ali Kabir Al Din Ahmad and Nassau Lees (Bib-Ind.). English translation, Vol. I, by G. S. Ranking, Vol. II by W. H. Lowe, and Vol. III by T. W. Haig.

Bartolomeo—Bartolomeo Fra Paolino Da Sen—*A Voyage to the East Indies* containing an account of the manners, customs of the natives, with notes and illustrations by John Beinhold Foster. Translation from the German by William Johnston.

Bengal in the 16th Century—J. N. Das Gupta, *Bengal in the 16th Century*.

Bernier—Bernier Francois, *Travels in the Mughal Empire*. English translation by Constable. Revised by V. A. Smith.

B.S.O.A.S.—Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.

C.A.A.M.—Central Asian Antiquities Museum.

De Laet—De Laet's *Empire of the Great Mogol*. Translation by J. S. Hoyland.

Della Valle—Pietro Della Valle, *The Travels of a Noble Roman into East Indies and Arabian Deserta*, London, 1664.

Dubois—*Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonials*. Translation from French by K. Beauchamp.

E. and D.—Sir Henry M. Elliot and Prof. John Dowson's *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vols. 1-8.

Ferishta—Ferishta M. Qasim Hindu Shah's *Tarikh-i-Ferishta*. English translation by John Briggs, entitled "History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power in India".

First Englishmen in India—Locke Courteney, *First Englishmen in India*.

Grose—F. S. Grose, *A Voyage to the East Indies*.

Hamilton—Alexander Hamilton's *A New Account of the East Indies*.

Herklots' Islam in India—*Qanun-i-Islam* or *Islam in India* by Jafar Sharif. Translated by G. H. Herklots. Revised by Crookes.

H.N.G.—*Humayunnama* by Gulbadan Begam. Translation by A. S. Beveridge.

H.S.S.—*Hindi Shabd Sagar*, Vol. I by Shyam Sundar Das.

I.A.E.—*Indian Art Exhibition*, Exhibition of Indian Art Catalogue.

I.N.—*Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri*. Edited by Abd Al Haii and Ahmad Ali. Urdu translation by Abalswala Muhammad Zakirya.

John Marshall in India—John Marshall in India—*Notes and Observations in Bengal* edited by Sir Shafaat Ahmad Khan.

J.B.O.R.—*Journal Bihar and Orissa Research Society*.

J.I.H.—*Journal Indian History*.

J.P.A.S.B.—*Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*.

J.U.P. Hist. Soc.—*Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society*.

Khafi Khan (K.K.)—*Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* (Bib-Ind.).

Khwandamir's Qanun-i-Humayun—*Qanun-i-Humayun*. English translation by Beni Prasad.

Lahori—Abdul Hamid Lahori's *Padshahnama* or *Badshahnama*. Edited by Kabir Al Din Ahmad and Abdul Rahim.

Linschoten—*Linschoten Von John Huyghen's Voyage to East Indies*, English translation by Mr. P. A. Tiele.

Mandelslo—Albert Mandelslo's *The Voyages and Travels of the Ambassadors sent by Frederick Duke of Holstein* by Adam Olearius, London, 1669.

Manrique—Manrique Fray Sebastein, *Travels of China and India*, Vol. II.

M. A.—*Maasir-i-Alamgiri*. Edited by Ahmad Ali (Bib-Ind.). Translation in Urdu by Fida Ali Talab.

Macauliffe—Macauliffe Max. Arthur, *The Sikh Religion*.

Monserrate—Monserrate, S. J., *The Commentarius*. English translation by J. S. Hoyland.

Nieuhoff's Voyages—*Voyages and Travels of, into Brazil and the East Indies*.

Norris Embassy—*William Norris' Embassy to Aurangzib* (1699-1702) by Harihar Das.

Orme's Fragments—Robert Orme, *Fragments of the Mogul Empire, of the Morattoes and of the English Concern in Hindustan.*

Ovington—*A Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689.*

Padumavat—Malik Muhammad Jayasi's *Padumavat.* Translated into Urdu by P. Bhagwati Prasad.

Pandey—*Hindu Samskaras—A Socio-Religious Study of the Hindu Sacraments* by Raj Bali Pandey.

Pelsaert's India—Pelsaert Francisco's *The Remonstrantie.* Translation by W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl.

Petermundy—*Travels in Europe and Asia*, Vol. II.

Purchas—*Hakluyt Posthumus* or *Purchas and His Pilgrimes*, 20 vols.

Ramayana (Growse)—*Ramayana of Tulsi Das.* Translated into English by F. S. Growse.

Saletore—*Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagara Empire* (A. D. 1346-1646) by B. A. Saletore.

Sinclair Stevenson—*The Rites of the Twice Born* by Sinclair Stevenson.

Srivastava—*Akbar, the Great* by A. L Srivastava.

Thevenot—*Travels of Monsieur Thevenot into the Levant.* Translated into English, Part III.

Travels in India in the 17th Century—*Travels in India in the 17th Century* by Sir Thomas Roe and Dr. John Fryer.

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CHAPTER 1

Customs, Rites and Ceremonies

SECTION I

PRE-NUPTIAL CEREMONIES

General

The purificatory rites of a Hindu begin before his birth.[1] Of the sixteen principal ceremonies[2] prescribed by Hindu lawgivers for a person, only six important ones,[3] viz., *Jatakarma* (birth ceremony), *Namakarana* (name-giving ceremony), *Chudakarana* (hair-cutting ceremony), *Upanayana* (initiation) and *Vivaha* (marriage), and certain obituary rites[4] are observed by the majority of the Hindus. The observance of these rites differs in various parts of this country in details only, the fundamental principles being the same everywhere.

---

[1] *Garbhadhana* (the ceremony of impregnation or conception) performed on the fourth day of the marriage and *Pumsavana* (a rite quickening a male child) celebrated in the third month of gestation and before the period of quickening deserve mention. R. B. Pandey, *Hindu Samskaras*, pp. 79-104; P. Thomas, *Hindu Religion, Customs and Manners*, p. 87. Also see G. P. Majumdar, *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, p. 301.

[2] For details of these observances refer to R. B. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-480 ; P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-96 ; G.P. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 295-408 ; Abbe J.A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* (Oxford, 1897), pp. 155-72 ; James Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II, pp. 650-51 ; Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson, *The Rites of the Twice Born*, Ch.I, pp. 1-26 ; W. Crookes, *The Natives of Northern India*, pp. 194-203 ; and for 'Hindu Observances in the Punjab' see H. A. Rose's article in the Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. XXXVII (1907), pp. 220-36. For "Some Beliefs and Customs relating to Birth among Santals" by W. J. Culshaw refer to J.R.A S B. Letters Vol. VII, 1941, pp. 115-27. For the ceremony of the sacred thread in the Punjab, see *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXXI (1902), p. 216.

Few references to these ceremonies are traceable in the contemporary records of the period.[5] Not unexpectedly, foreign travellers, who could not have an access to the inner apartments, are silent about these domestic rites excepting, of course, the marriage ceremony which was celebrated with all possible pomp and show. However, from the few and scattered references here and there in the works of the contemporary Persian chroniclers of the period as well as in the accounts of the foreign travellers, we may safely conclude that these ceremonies must have been observed in much the same manner in Mughal times as they are today.[6]

---

[3] The rest of the ceremonies performed after birth are *Simantonnayana* known as *Simanta* (hair splitting) in South India performed on the woman when she bears her first child, *Niskramana* (first outing) performed .in the third or fourth month of a baby's birth, and *Annaprasana* (solid food giving ceremony) performed in the sixth month are observed by the orthodox only. R.B. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-15, 146-50, and 151-57 respectively. Also see *Birth, Childhood and Puberty Ceremonies among the Birhors*, pp. 214-31, Bihar and Orissa Research Society Journal, Vol. IV, 1918.

[4] The rites relating to marriage are *Vaghana* (pre-nuptial), *Vivaha* (nuptial) and daily life (post-nuptial) while those relating to death are *Antarjali* (pre-obituary), *Antyesti* (Obituary) and *Sraddha* (post-obituary). These will be discussed in the succeeding pages. For details the reader may refer to G. P. Majumdar, *op. cit* , pp. 367-408 and R. B. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 407-80.

[5] Bartolomeo (pp. 253-60) describes some of the ceremonies observed in Malabar in the 18th century.

[6] 'A Few Literary Glimpses of Social and Religious Life in Medieval Bengal', *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, Jan-March, 1944.

Birth Ceremonies

Abul Fazl describes the birth ceremony,[7] when honey stirred in *ghee* is put into the mouth (of the infant) by means of a gold ring.[8] In Bengal the womenfolk would pour down and shower grains of paddy and tufts of green grass on the head of the newborn, praying for its long life.[9] Tulsidas and Surdas refer to the performance of *Nandimukh Sraddha*[10] just after the birth when offerings of gold, cows, plate and jewels were made to the Brahmans.[11] A cord made of *durba*[12] grass interwoven with mango leaves was usually hung over the main door as a mark of festivity. It was the usual practice in the well-to-do families, as it is now, to celebrate the birth anniversary when a knot was added to the silk thread till the formal ceremony of *Upanayana* took place.[13] The horoscope of the child was invariably got prepared soon after its birth.[14]

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[7] For Tulsi's description of birthday ceremonies refer to F. S. Growse, *The Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Allahabad, 1883), pp. 97-98 ; also see *Sur Sagar*, published by Kashi Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Prayag, 1916), Vol. I. p. 263 ; B. P. Tiratha, *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*, pp. 271-72 ; *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 25.

[8] *Ain*, III, p. 317.

[9] Chaitanyabhagavata, 1, 3, 17, quoted in *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, p. 99 ; *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, I, p. 263.

[10] *The Ramayana of Tulsidas* (English translation) A. G. Atkins, Vol. I, p. 246. The *Nandimukh Sraddha* is a commemorative offering to the Manes preliminary to any joyous occasion such as initiation, marriage etc. in which nine balls of meat are offered to the deceased father, grandfather, great grandfather, to the maternal grandfather and to the mother, paternal grandmother and paternal great grandmother. Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 97, f.n. 1 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[11] Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

[12] *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, I, p. 263.

[13] *Ain*, III, p. 317.

[14] Guru Nanak's horoscope was prepared by Hardial. Macauliffe, *The Sikh Religion*, Vol. I, p. 1. For Chaitanya refer to J.N. Sarkar, *Chaitanya's Life and Teachings*, p. 20 ; *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 36, *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 290.

Ovington describes at some length the *Namakarana Samskara*.[15] Usually the child was named[16] after the expiry of the period of confinement lasting forty days.[17] Fryer corroborates it.[18] Surdas refers to the practice of putting a *tilak* on the child's forehead after mixing curd, milk and *haldi*.[19] The custom of ascertaining on this occasion the natural bent of the child by placing several articles such as paddy, fried rice, clod of earth, gold, silver, etc. before him and inducing it to choose any one of them was also observed particularly in Bengal.[20]

Jayasi[21] as well as Surdas[22] refer to some ceremonies observed on the sixth day after birth. But it appears that they were in vogue among the rich families only. Surdas writes that on this occasion "the gardener's wife offers a garland of flowers while the goldsmith presents a necklace studded with diamonds and pearls. The barber's wife applies *mahur* of nine colours on the feet of the mother while the carpenter's wife brings a cradle made of sandal-wood for the newly born.[23]

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[15] Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat* (ed. H. S. Rawlinson), 1929, p. 197 ; Gauda-Lekhamala, I, 6, 38, quoted in 'Social and Religious Life in Medieval Bengal', *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No 3, Jan-March, 1944 ; Sarkar, *Chaitanya's Life and Teachings*, p. 20 ; Bartolomeo (pp. 258-59) describes the rites performed in Malabar in the 18th century. Also see B. P. Tiratha, *Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*, pp. 271-75.

[16] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 282 ; *Ain*, III, p. 317 ; Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 99. According to Ovington (p. 197), this ceremony may be performed after 10 days. The naming ceremony may be performed from the tenth up to the first day of the second year. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[17] During this period, the house was regarded as unclean. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 242.

[18] Fryer (old), p. 94. According to the traveller the child is named without much ceremony.

[19] *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 290. Also see A. G. Atkins, *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*, trans., Vol. I, p. 251.

[20] For details refer to B. P. Tiratha, *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu*.

[21] *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 25.

[22] *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 274-75.

[23] *Ibid.*

Annaprasana

Surdas describes the ceremony of *Annaprasana* when solid food was given for the first time to the infant.[24] The ceremony, it appears, was usually performed six months after the birth of the child when relatives, friends and neighbours would assemble. *Khir*, honey and *ghee*, according to the poet Surdas,[25] would be placed before the child whose father helped him to taste it after due ceremonies.[26]

Hair-cutting or *Mundan* Ceremony

The hair-cutting ceremony was celebrated with the customary rites not earlier than the age of three, leaving one lock on the top of the head.[27] The ears of the child were also bored usually on that day.[28] Surdas describes the *Karnavedha*[29] ceremony of Shree Krishna who was fondled with a *puri* and a piece of gur while his ears were being pierced.[30]

Upanayana

The important ceremony of the 'Sacred Thread' or *Upa-*

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[24] Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-57.

[25] *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 291.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 291.

[27] Alberuni refers to the hair-cutting ceremony in these words : "The ceremony on the occasion of the first cutting of the hair is offered in the third, the perforation of the ear takes place in the 7th and 8th year." Alberuni, II, (Sachan) p. 157. De Laet, p. 80. Also see Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 162 ; Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 102 ; Sanyal, *Shree Krishna Chaitanya*, Vol. I, p. 304 ; P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 89 ; G. P. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 335-37.

[28] *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, p. 98. Compare Pandey *op. cit.*, pp. 173-74.

[29] *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 321. Also see Sanyal, *op. cit.*, p. 304 ; Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

[30] *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 321.

nayana attracted the attention of many contemporary writers who present a fairly accurate account of its observance during Mughal days. Emperor Jahangir, while describing the four modes of a Brahman's life, refers to this ceremony[31] which has been the exclusive privilege of the three higher castes.[32] He fixes the age for the *Upanayanam* as prior to eight years[33] when a special function was held and a large number of Brahmans were invited.[34] A cord of *munja* grass[35] or of cotton,[36] usually 2¼ yards long, according to Jahangir, was made into three strings to be tied round the waist of the boy after reciting certain prayers over it.[37]

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[31] R and B, I, p. 357. For details see Macauliffe, I, pp. 16-18.

[32] S. N. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 385 and pp. 4, 15. *Asiatick Researches*, V, pp. 16-17. The priest called on the *Janeo* ceremony of Guru Nanak explained : "Before this ceremony and the investiture of the sacred thread, a boy of any of the three higher castes is not recognized as belonging to his proper caste but a Sudra." Macauliffe *op. cit.*, I, p. 17. Also see P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 90 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

[33] Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 259) raises the age to nine or even ten years. Guru Nanak was invested with the sacred thread at the age of nine years. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 16. Padmavati was sent to school at the age of 5. *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 25. This ceremony varies for different castes and for different purposes, but usually takes place between the age of seven and ten, but may be postponed till the age of 16 in case of a Brahman, 22 in case of a Kshatriya and 24 for a Vaisya in special circumstances. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-204 ; P. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 90 ; Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-47.

[34] R and B, I, p. 357.

[35] "The girdle of a Brahman was made of *munja* grass, that of a Kshatriya of a bow string and that of a Vaisya of wool." Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 224 ; Dubois, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 167.

[36] Guru Nanak refers to it. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 17 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 259 ; Pyrard, I, pp. 372-73. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 392. Brahman should have girdle of *munja* grass, Kshatriya of *kusa* grass and Vaisya of *urna-sutra*, *avisutra*, hemper of *murva* fibres. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, p. 346.

[37] R and B, I, p. 357 ; *Ain*, III, p. 274 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 224 ; J. A. Dubois, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 167. Guru Nanak refers to the ceremony of killing and cooking a goat on such an occasion. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 17

The sacred thread,[38] consisting of three threads, each composed of three finer threads interwined into one and costing about four *damris*[39] was then hung on the left shoulder of the boy, the ends tied round the right arm.[40] Abul Fazl wrongly puts its length to be 26 times the circumference of the fist.[41] Its length is usually ninety-six times the breadth of the four fingers of a man which is equal to his height.[42] The three threads represent the Trinity, the Hindu Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh,[43] and the white colour signifies purity.[44] The curious reader may refer to *Hindu Samskaras* by R. B. Pandey for details.

School going Ceremony

Being thus invested with the sacred thread, the boy began his studies[45] in right earnest under some teacher. Surdas refers to the practice of being initiated to a *mantra* (*Gayatri*) from the *Guru* before commencing studies. Brahmans were offered presents and the poor were given alms.[46] Phillips in his *Account of the Religion, Manners and Learning of the People of Malabar* gives a detailed account of the customs followed by the Hindus while putting their sons to school.[47] On an auspicious day fixed after consultation with an astrologer, the boy's parents would invite the school-teacher and all his pupils to their home where, after some ceremonies had been gone through, the teacher wrote down some letters of alphabet on a leaf perfumed with incense and sprinkled over with cucum root. It was taken round to be touched and blessed by those present. After the boy had repeated these alphabets after the teacher and made obeisance before the gods, sweetmeats were distributed among those assembled. The teacher and his pupils were served with rice and some presents were offered to the former.[48] The ceremony of *Samavartana* was performed when the student returned home after the completion of his studies.[49]

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[38] The scriptures provide that cotton cords should be worn by the Brahmans, woollen by the Kshatriyas and linen by the Vaisyas. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

[39] About one pice of Indian money. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 16.

[40] Della Valle, I, pp. 88-89 and f.n. 3, p. 88 ; Jahangir (R and B, I, p. 357) wrongly says that it was hung on the right shoulder. For other contemporary references see *Ain*, III, pp. 128, 272-73 ; Purchas' *India*, p. 112 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 259 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 46. When a person decided to take up the life of a casteless homeless *Sannyasi* he would destroy his sacred thread and the tuft of hair on the crest of his head. Sarkar, *Chaitanya*, p. 29.

[41] *Ain*, III, pp. 272-73.

[42] Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 226 ; Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 31 ; A. J. Dubois, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 165-88 ; *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXXI (1902), p. 216.

[43] Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 260 ; Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 90. According to one authority the triple cord symbolizes the body, speech and mind and a person has got control over these when the knots are tied. Dubois, *op. cit.*, I, p. 163. Also see Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 346-47.

[44] For its symbolism and significance see Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

[45] Growse, *op. cit.*, p. 102; *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 25. For details refer to P. N. Chopra, *Society and Culture during the Mughal Age*, p. 120. Also see R.C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, pp. 599-600.

Desire for a male child among Muslims

The craving for a male offspring was quite intense in a Muhammadan[50] who often employed various devices to achieve that end.[51] Even Emperor Akbar did not hesitate to take the vow of undertaking an arduous journey to Ajmer, the shrine of Khwaja Muin-ud-din Chishti, if he was blessed with a son.[52] Babar was equally anxious to have male children. Just before the birth of Hindal, the Emperor inscribed two papers, one with a boy's name and the other with that of a girl. Enclosing them in clay he set them in water. The name first revealed, to the Emperor's joy, was that of a boy.[53] Only the ladies of the seraglio would celebrate the birth of a princess while the whole court and even the Empire took part in the jubiliations if a prince was born.[54] Manucci relates in detail the rejoicings which followed the birth of a son in a rich family.[55]

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[46] *Sur Sagar*, *op. cit.*, II, pp.1317-18.

[47] Phillips, *An Account of the Religion, Manners and Learning of the People of Malabar*, pp. 67-69.

[48] *Ibid.*; Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-260. Isan Nagara, the author of the *Advaitaprakasa* composed in A.D. 1568 describes in detail the initiation ceremony of the eldest son of Advaita Acharya at Santipura. *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3 (Jan.-March 1944). There is also a reference to this ceremony in *Chaitanya Bhagavata* (i, 5, 27).

[49] Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-60 and R. C. Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 600.

[50] *Storia*, III, p 150 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 17. Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi*, English Translation by Muhammad Husayn Nainar, pt. I, p. 19 For Hindus see *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, Jan-March, 1944, pp. 92, 99. "The Maratha Poet-Saint Dasopant Digamber" by Justin E. Abbot in Journal of American Oriental Society, Vol. 42, pp. 267-68.

Muslim Ceremonies

Of the numerous ceremonies and rituals which now attend a Muhammadan's birth, only *Aqiqah*[56] has been enjoined upon by Muhammad. The other important rituals,[57] such as the naming ceremony, *Bismillah* (initiation),[58] *Sunnat* (circumcision),[59] etc. owe their origin either to the 'Traditions' or other Muhammadan works on ethics. Many more[60] have been added, especially in India, through the influence of local customs, prejudices and superstitions. These ceremonies vary from country to country and in India from province to province, but there is general agreement in the number of the main observances everywhere.

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[51] Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 17-18.

[52] A.N., II, pp. 350-51, tr., II, pp. 510-11; T.A., II, pp. 358, 361.

[53] Gulbadan, *Humayunnama*, p. 9.

[54] *Storia*, II, p. 343 A.N., II, pp. 345-48 ; Tr., II, pp. 504-8. There were festivities for seven days on the birth of Jahangir. T.A., II (trans.), p. 358. A beautiful painting in "A Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures" by Sir Thomas W. Arnold revised and edited by J.V.S. Wilkinson, Vol. II, Plate No. 21 shows 'Akbar rejoicing at the birth of Salim'. Plates Nos. 22 and 23 show 'Akbar receiving congratulations on the birth of Murad'. Also see Plates III-VI of 'A Catalogue of Indian Collections' Part VI, Mughal Painting.

[55] *Storia,* III, p. 150. For beautiful paintings depicting the birth of a prince see plates III-VI of Catalogue of Indian Collections in Boston Museum, Part VI by K. Coomaraswamy.

[56] *Aqiqah* literally means 'the hair of the new born' but the term has been applied by Metonymy to the shaving sacrifice usually observed on the seventh day. Two goats for a boy and one goat for a girl are sacrificed on this day. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 50 ; Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*, II, p. 659 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 38 ; Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali's *Mussulmauns of India*, Vol. II, p. 9.

Custom of Cord-cutting

No connected account has been left of the customs and superstitions that attended a child's birth in Mughal days. We can, however, form an idea of these from the stray references found here and there. For instance, on pregnancy, it was thought to be a good augury to change the residence ; Salim's mother was sent from Agra to Shaikh's house at Fatehpur Sikri.[61] Manucci relates the peculiar custom of cord-cutting[62] followed in the royal family.[63] The cord was severed by means of a thread and put in a small bag which was kept under the child's pillow with certain cabalistic writings on the bag for forty days.[64]

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[57] For various observances on this day see Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 51 ; Hastings, *op. cit.*, II, p. 659 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 21-23 ; also see H.A. Rose's article on "Muhammadan Birth Observances in the Punjab", pp. 237-60 in J.R.A.I., Vol. XXXVII, 1907.

[58] Lit. 'pronouncing the name of God', i.e., to recite the inscription which occurs at the commencement of the Quran —"*Bismillah-i-r-rahman-i-r-rahim*" : In the name of God the Merciful, the Gracious. Crookes' *Islam in India*, pp. 43-44.

[59] Arabic *Khitan* or *Khatna*. Usually the operation is performed between the ages of seven or ten years, but it is lawful to circumcise a child seven days after the birth. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 51. Hastings' *Encyclopaedia*, *op. cit.*, II, 660 ; III, p. 659. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 48 ; Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali's *Mussulmauns of India*, Vol. II, p. 12. Also see G. B. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, I, p. 96. The authenticity of a tradition allowing circumcision has been disputed. For information on this topic see *Punjab Notes and Queries*, Vol. I, p. 86 ; E.R.E., II, p. 223 ; Vol III, pp. 667 ff ; Bray Deny's *The Life History of a Brahui and A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and N.W.F.P.*, Vol. I, pp. 778 ff ; III, p. 228. Also J.R.A.I., Vol.XXXVII, p. 255. According to Muhammad Shah-dullah the custom of circumcision prevailed among the Dravidians. He quotes passages from Kamasutra and Vatsyayana in support of his theory. J.A.S.B., New Series, Vol. XVII, 1921, pp. 237-60.

[60] For various customs borrowed from the Hindus see Herklots' *Islam in India*, Chapters II-IX. Also J.R.A.I., Vol. XXXVII (1907), pp. 237-60.

Ceremonies at Birth

It was customary to pour honey into the infant's mouth[65] immediately after birth and to press his mother's breast so that "a drop of milk comes out".[66] '*Azan*' or the Muslim call to prayer was sounded in the ears of the infant.[67] Akbar not only followed the Hindu mode of preparing horoscopes[68] (on the birth of his sons and grandsons) but also postponed his visit to Fatehpur to see his new born son, Salim, in deference to a belief prevalent among the Hindus that "whenever God, after long expectation, has bestowed an auspicious child, he be not produced before the honoured father till after a long delay."[69]

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[61] *Maasir*, p. 169.

[62] For the various modes of cord-cutting followed in India, see Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 22-23.

[63] *Storia*, II, p. 346.

[64] *Ibid.* Also notice Akbar's instructions to convey Prince Danial to Amber when he was a month old. A. N., II, p. 345 ; Tr., II, p. 505.

[65] A.N., I, p. 43 ; Tr., I, p. 129. This custom was perhaps borrowed from the Hindus.

[66] Jahangir relates this custom. *Tuzuk* (Lowe), pp. 16, 28.

[67] *Mirat-i-Sikandri* (trans.), p. 121.

[68] For Akbar's horoscope see A.N., I, pp. 27-28, 43 and 232-33; and Tr., I, pp. 36, 129 and 464 ; and A.N., II, p. 347 ; Tr., II, p. 507 ; T.A., II, p. 505. For Jahangir's horoscope A.N , II, p. 347 ; Tr., II, p. 507. For a painting showing astrologers casting the horoscope of a prince on his birth, see A Catalogue of Indian Collections, pt. VI, Mughal Painting—by A. K. Coomaraswamy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Cambridge, 1930, Plates III-VI. For Murad's horoscope A.N., II, p. 356 ; Tr., II, p. 515.

Naming Ceremony

The naming ceremony of a child was usually performed on the day of his birth[70] when the grandfather would give the name.[71] Akbar was named Badr-ud-din immediately after his birth.[72]

Birthday Anniversaries

Birthday anniversaries were celebrated by the rich with great rejoicings. It was the usual custom to add a knot each year to a yellow silken or cotton string allotted to the child on his birth.[73] The birthday of the ruling monarch was celebrated throughout the Empire with great pomp and show.[74] From the time of Humayun onwards on this occasion, the Emperor was weighed against certain precious metals and articles which were given away in charity.[75] Aurangzeb stopped this practice in the 51st year of his reign.[76] The princes were also weighed on the solar anniversaries of their birth.[77]

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[69] A.N., II, p. 345 ; Tr., II, p. 505.

[70] Sometimes it is observed on that day. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 26 ; Hughes' *Dictionary*, p. 51 ; Hastings, *op. cit.*, II, p. 659.

[71] *Storia*, II, p. 343. Immediately after her birth Jahanara was presented with due ceremonies to Jahangir to receive name. G. Yazdani, "Jahanara", Journal of Punjab Historical Society, Vol. X, p. 1.

[72] Smith, *Akbar*, p. 18 f. Later on he was renamed Jalal-ud-din Akbar. Nizamuddin, however, mentions the name of Jalal ud-din given to Akbar just after his birth. T.A., II (trans.), p. 92.

[73] *Storia*, II, p. 346 ; Ain, I, p. 267 ; E. & D., V. p. 307.

[74] *Ain*, I, pp. 266-67; Badauni, II, p. 84 ; Tr., II, p. 85 ; Thevenot, Chapt. XXVI, p. 47 ; De Laet, pp. 101-2 ; Mandelslo, p. 42. For details see *Early Travels*, p. 119 ; Roe's *Embassy*, pp. 378-80 (1926 edition); Della Valle, p. 459 ; Manrique, pp. 200-4 ; Mandelslo, p. 42 ; Tavernier, p. 122 ; *Storia*, II, p. 348 ; Bernier, p. 272 ; Thevenot, XXVI, p. 47 ; *Qanun-i-Humayun*, p. 76 ; *Ain*, I (1873), pp. 266-67; R and B, I, pp. 78, 115, 160 ; *Padshahnama*, I, p. 243 ; M. A., p. 51.

Chhathi or the Sixth Day

Chhathi or the sixth day[78] is also an important one. Manucci mentions great celebrations on this day.[79] Feasts were held, illumination was arranged and fireworks were let off.[80] It was customary, after bathing the child, to put on a shirt made of any article of dress worn by some ancient worthy.[81] Akbar's first clothes were made out of the garments of the saint Sayyid Ali Shirazi.[82]

Aqiqah Rites

The *Aqiqah* rite was usually performed on the seventh day.[83] It consisted of a sacrifice of two goats for a boy and one for a girl. The first shaving of the child was also done on this day. Abul Fazl alludes to a Turkish custom incorporated by the Mughals. When a child began to walk, it was usual for the father or the grandfather to strike it with his turban so that it might fall down. Mirza Askari performed this rite when Akbar was one year and four months old.[84] It was supposed to ward off the evil eye.[85] There seems to have been no hair-cutting ceremony among the Muhammadans. The author of the *Darbar-i-Akbari*, however, mentions that Akbar was specially taken to the Dargah of Hasan Abdal for this rite.[86]

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[75] See a beautiful painting (Plate No. 33) showing 'Akbar being weighed' in a Catalogue of the Indian Miniatures, by Sir Thomas W. Arnold revised and edited by J.V.S. Wilkinson, Vol. II.

[76] Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib*, III, pp. 85-86.

[77] *Ain*, I, p. 267 f.n. ; R & B, I, p. 115 ; Sharma's Bibliography, p. 19.

[78] For various rites observed on this day, see Crookes' *Islam in India*, pp. 36-37 ; J.R.A.I. (1907), Vol. XXXVI, p. 244.

[79] *Storia*, III, p. 150.

[80] *Ibid.*

[81] Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 36.

[82] *Ibid.*

[83] Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 51 ; Hastings' E. R. E., Vol. II, p. 659 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 38. In South India and Panjab it is observed on the sixth day or put off to some other convenient date. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 38 ; J.R.A.I., *op. cit.*, p. 244.

Maktab Ceremony

The *Bismillah* (initiation) or more properly the *maktab* ceremony was performed when a boy was four years four months and four days old.[87] Most of the Mughal princes started their education at this age.[88] It is similar to the Hindu ceremony of *Upanayana*.

Circumcision

It appears that *Sunnat* or circumcision ceremony[89] was performed with great pomp and show,[90] at a very young age, during Mughal days. Ashraf's view that a Muslim child was circumcised usually at the age of seven is not borne out by documentary evidence.[91] Jahangir, Murad and Daniyal were all circumcised before they were five years old.[92] Akbar prohibited this rite before the age of 12 and even then left it to the boy's option.[93] This order, however, did not put a check to this practice. Fryer saw the rite performed with all pomp and show at the age of eight.[94] Mannuci refers to its celebration with usual feastings during the reign of Aurangzeb.[95]

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[84] Azad, *Darbar-i-Akbari* (Urdu), pp. 7-8.

[85] A. N., I, p. 194 ; Tr., I, 397.

[86] Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[87] Hughes, *Dictionary*, p. 51 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 44.

[88] For Jahangir see A. N. (Bev.), III, pp. 105-6 ; T. A., II, pp. 423-24 ; E. and D., V, p. 370 ; Badauni (Lowe), II, p. 173.

[89] *Travels in India in the 17th Century* (p. 281) refers to the observation of this custom. According to Sir Saiyid all the Mughal Emperors up to the time of Humayun had been actually circumcised. Akbar, owing to the adverse circumstances of his father, when he was born, could not be circumcised. Later on, he was far advanced in age for that ceremony. (Refer to Latif, *Agra : Historical and Descriptive*, Calcutta, 1896, p. 205, f.n.) Both Abul Fazl and Nizam-ud-din, however, refute this assertion.

SECTION II

MARRIAGE CEREMONIES

General

Vivaha is the most important of all the Hindu *samskaras*.[96] For several reasons marriage was held in high esteem by ancient people.[97] Hindus in Mughal days, too, regarded it as "one of the greatest felicities of human life."[98] Marriage was the rule[99] and the few[100] who turned their face from it from pious motives were highly respected. Dadu's reply to Raja Man Singh of Amber regarding the advisability of celibacy was significant. "When so many are aflame with lust, what reproach is there in continence.........I neither enjoin marriage nor forbid it. Let each choose for himself the poison or the nectar."[101] Marriage was of greater importance to a Muhammadan who followed the edict of the Prophet that every Muhammadan should marry.[102] Celibacy was condemned by the Prophet[103] and Abul Fazl thus elaborates: "If there be no marriages then the fountain-head of humanity shall become choked and the stream of divine benevolence shall sink into the sand."[104]

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[90] Jahangir was circumcised at Fatehpur in 1573 A. D. There were great festivities and all the nobles, sayyids and shaikhs were invited. T. A., II (trans.), p. 422 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 281. Akbar's age at that time was 3 years and some months. Gulbadan writes 5 years, M.A. and *Mirat-i-Jahan-Numa* and *Tazkirat-us-Salatin-i-Chaghtai*, 2 years and ten months ; S. K. Banerji, *Humayun Badshah*, II, p. 152, f.n. i.

[91] Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, p. 249.

[92] A. N. (Bev.), III, pp. 102-3 ; T. A. in E & D, V, p. 370 ; Badauni (Lowe), II, p. 173 ; Roe (ed. Foster), p. 313 ; Coryat and Salbancke (Letters Received by East India Company, VI, pp. 183-85) wrongly assert that Jahangir was never circumcised. According to Salbancke (*Ibid.*) and Sir Roe (ed. Foster, p. 312), the term Mughal meant circumcised. For circumcision ceremony of the sons of Nizam-ul-Mulk of Deccan refer to *Hadiqatul Alam* by Mir Abu Turab, Vol. II, Haiderabad, p. 71.

[93] *Ain*, I, (1873), p. 207.

[94] Fryer (old edition), p. 94.

[95] *Storia*, II, p. 221.

[96] Pandey, *op: cit.*, p. 261 ; Dubois, I, p. 208 ; Altekar, *Position of Women*, p. 37.

Early Marriages

Early marriages were no doubt in vogue in those days.[105] Socio-politic and religious circumstances compelled a father to have his daughter married as early as possible.[106] The anxiety of a Brahman general of the Peshwa who could not get his daughter married at the age of 9 may well be imagined : "If the marriage is postponed to the next year," he writes from the battle-field, "the bride would be as old as 10. It will be a veritable calamity and scandal."[107]

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[97] Even the marriage ceremonies have found expression in Rig-veda and the Atharv-veda. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 261, 264.

[98] *Storia*, III, p. 54; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 31.

[99] Orme's *Fragments* (1805), p. 408; T. V. Mahalingam, *Social Life under Vijayanagar*, University of Madras, 1940.

[100] Usually Brahman Priests. Hedges' *Diary*, II, p. cccxiv; Stavorinus, I, p. 433.

[101] M. G. Orr, *A Sixteenth Century Indian Mystic—Dadu and His Followers*, p. 37.

[102] Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 56.

[103] *Ibid.*

[104] A. N., III (Bev.), p. 677.

[105] For deterioration of Hindu society during medieval times refer to Altekar, *Position of Women in India*, pp. 68-73; Grose, I, p. 194; *First Englishmen in India*, p. 102.

[106] P. N. Chopra, *Society and Culture during the Mughal Age*, p. 111.

Abul Fazl also alludes to the custom of the country when he writes : "It is held expedient that the bride should be under 8 and any age over 10 is thought improper."[108] The assertion of European travellers like Pelsaert, Mandleslo, Thevenot and others that the barbarians would marry their children in teens may further corroborate it.[109] Gandharb Sen, the Raja of Sangaldip, according to Jayasi, made preparations for the marriage of his daughter at the age of 2."[110] But Varadraja, a pupil of Bhattoji Dikshit, considered it an evil practice among the Southerners to marry a daughter before she had attained the age of four.[111] An enlightened king like Akbar was fully conscious of the dangers inherent in such early marriages and issued orders that the boys were not to marry before the age of 16 nor girls before 14.[112] It was the duty of the Kotwal to verify and note down the ages of the couple before giving his consent to the marriage. The remark of Badauni[113] that "in this way corruption became rife......large profits found their way into the pockets of the police officers" may be true but it was indeed a bold venture and must have put some check. This order was neither rigorously enforced nor renewed by the later Emperors.[114] It appears, however, from the accounts of the contemporary travellers that in many cases this early marriage, specially among the urban population, used to be a formal function as the actual co-habitation took place much later.[115] Ferishta[116] and Bartolomeo,[117] a later traveller, describe it as a betrothal function. Ferishta writes : "Nehal, a farmer girl, had been betrothed to a young man of her own caste in childhood agreeably to the custom of Hindustan." The girl would be brought up usually in her parents' home after the ceremony till the age of puberty when after great ceremony she would go back to her husband's home.[118] Manucci, Purchas, Linschoten, besides many other contemporary travellers, corroborate it. It is interesting to note, however, that the Mughal princes were married when fairly grown up.[119]

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[107] Quoted in Altekar's *Position of Women*, p. 73.

[108] Chopra, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

[109] Ralph Fitch, *First Englishmen in India*, p. 102 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 38 ; Terry, *Early Travels*, p. 221 : Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 84 ; Thevenot, Chapt. XLVIII, p. 83 ; Linschoten, I, p. 249 ; Mandelslo, p. 51 ; Grose, *A Voyage to the East Indies*, I, pp. 193-94 ; Phillips' *Account of Malabar*, *op. cit.*, p. 103 ; Tavernier, II, p. 197. Also see Altekar's *Position of Women*, p. 68 ; T. V. Mahalingam, *Vijayanagar Administration*, p. 257 ; Majumdar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 602.

[110] *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 96.

[111] Bhartiya Vidya, Feb. 1945, Vol. VI, No. 2 (New Series), p. 23.

[112] The Emperor was of the opinion that off-spring of such early marriages was weakling. *Ain*, I (1873), pp. 195, 203 ; Azad, *Darbar-i-Akbari*, pp. 79-80.

[113] Badauni, II, p. 391-92 ; Tr., II, p. 404-6.

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[114] Jahangir was no doubt of the view that the marriage should not take place before the age of 12. But he did not enforce it. A. N., III, pp. 381-84 ; Tr., III, pp. 561-66.

[115] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 185 ; Linschoten (I, Hak. Soc., p. 249), writes : "When the woman is seven years old and the man nine years; they do marry, but they come not together before the woman be strong enough to bear children." *Storia*, III, p. 65 ; *First Englishmen in India*, p. 101.

[116] Ferishta (Briggs), II, p. 380.

[117] Bartolomeo, p. 275.

[118] *Storia*, III, p. 65 ; Bartolomeo (p. 275) writes : "Bridegroom after the betrothal returns home and the *kanya* is left at her own house for the consummation does not actually take place till the bride has had her monthly purifications......" Even Altekar observes that post-puberty marriages continued as local custom and in some of the areas that continued to be under the influence of the old pre-Aryan culture for example in Malabar. Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

[119] Khurram was 17 years old when his marriage with the daughter of Muzaffar Husain Mirza was celebrated in 1610. His second marriage with Arjumand Banu came off at the age of 20 years 3 months. R & B., I, p. 224, f.n. 2. Dara Shukoh was over 18 when he was wedded. K. R. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 13 and 9. Aurangzeb was married at the

Intercaste Marriages

Intercaste marriages were out of fashion.[120] In addition to the consideration of *varna*, the particular family to be related was thoroughly examined. The reason for this, as Abul Fazl asserts, was the desire for best progeny for which physically, mentally and morally fit matches were necessary as the children inherit the good or bad qualities of their parents.[121] The curious reader may refer to the *Ain* for details regarding caste

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age of 18 years 7 months (Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, pp. 1-2), Kam Bakhsh at the age of 14 (*Ibid.*) and Prince Muhammad Azam at the age of 15½ years (*Ibid.*, p. 62). Amongst Aurangzeb's sons, Muhammad Akbar was married before he was 15 (Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, Vol. III, p. 52), and Muhammad Sultan at the age of 20 years (*Ibid.*, p. 44). As regards others, Guru Nanak was 14 years old when married to Sulakhani, daughter of Mula (Macauliffe, Vol. I, pp. 18-19). Sayed Ghulam Husain Khan, author of *Siyarul Mutakherin* married to his maternal cousin at the age of 18. *Calcutta Review*, Vol. 84, No. I, July 1942, p. 75.

[120] The marriage was thought to be unlawful "if the genealogical lines of either of the paternal and maternal ancestory unite within fifth degree of ascent, if in the two paternal genealogies they unite in any generation, if in the paternal genealogies of both parties consanguinity through female occurs in the sixth generation by mother's side." *Ain*, III, p. 310. It was from 10th century that inter-caste marriages began to go out of fashion. Altekar, *op. cit.*, p. 90. Gardizi wrote in 1048 A.D. : "The Indians are very fastidious in maintaining the rules of relationship and will not take a wife from anywhere or give a girl away unless the match suits their origin." B. S. O. S. London, Vol. XII, 1948. p. 627. For contemporary accounts see *Early Travels*, p. 221 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 415 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 255.

[121] A. N. (Bev.), III, p. 677 ; Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 415, 465 ; Thevenot, p. 67 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-14 ; Dubois, I, p. 214 ; Stavorinus, I, p. 410. When Tukaram's daughters were of marriageable age he selected boys of his own caste and got them married. J. R. A. S. (Bombay), Vol. VII, p. 21.

restrictions.[122] Careri[123] and Manucci[124] have also dealt with the topic at some length. The rules were, however, not rigidly adhered to as is evident from a perusal of the Duracaras by Varadaraja, a pupil of Bhattoji Diksita.[125]

Marriage among Muhammadans

No such restrictions exist among Muhammadans. Barring a few close relations such as mother, grandmother, sister, niece, aunt, etc. they have complete freedom of choice.[126] But in spite of this, it is to be regretted, marriages between Shias and Sunnis, Turks and Indians were very rare.[127] Mughals, too, maintained their distinction. Siadat Khan, a noble of Aurangzeb's reign, refused to marry a daughter of the Shia courtier, Ruhullah Khan.[128]

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[122] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 339

[123] Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 255.

[124] *Storia*, III, p. 55.

[125] Some Provincial Social Customs and Manners Mentioned as Duracaras by Varadaraja (A pupil of Bhattoji Diksita (A.D. 1600-60) in *Bhartiya Vidya,* Feb. 1945, Vol. VI, No. 2 (New Series), p. 28.

[126] The prohibited degrees include consanguinity—mother, grandmother, sister, niece, aunt, etc., affinity—mother-in-law, step daughters, grand-daughters, etc., foster-age, with wife's sister during lifetime of the wife unless she is divorced of the wife of another until the period of probation (*Iddat*) has expired, three months after divorce, four months ten days after widowhood with polytheists who do not include Jews or Christians. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 56.

[127] The first notable marriage of this kind before Humayun and Hamida Banu was of Babur and Mehar Begum. *Indian Culture*, IV, No. 1 (1937).

[128] Outwardly Ruhullah Khan had adopted Sunnism to please the orthodox Aurangzeb and also wrote in his will that his two daughters be wedded to Sunnis. Aurangzeb ordered : "give his elder daughter to Prince Muhammad Azim and the younger to Siadat Khan." The latter submitted : "This hereditary servant is unwilling to marry Ruhullah Khan's daughter. How do we know that she, too, holds the creed of the Sunnis ? In case she presses in her ow

Marriages between near relations were common among Muhammadans.[129] Akbar, however, disliked this custom and thought it highly improper to get into matrimonial alliance with near and dear ones.[130] Abul Fazl commends it in certain circumstances when it is to be regarded as a "slight evil for a great good".[131] Among Hindus it was thought improper for a younger brother or sister to marry so long as the elder was unmarried.[132] Some Maharashtrians, however, did indulge in it for practical convenience.[133]

Age of Husband and Wife

Hindus followed Manu's edict that a bridegroom should be older than his bride.[134] There was no such restriction in Muhammadan law. Sometimes a youngman attracted by the wealth of an old lady would marry her disregarding the abnormal difference in age.[135] The evil spread so much that Akbar had to issue strict orders declaring such marriages illegal. He further laid it down that if a woman happened to be older by 12 years than her husband, the marriage should be considered as illegal and annulled.[136] It is to be regretted,

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faith what can I do ?" J. N. Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 122.

[129] Marriages between first cousins (may be children of brothers and sisters) is considered very suitable. Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 52.

[130] *Ain*, I, p. 217; E. R. E., VII, pp. 866-67 and Vol. V, p. 743.

[131] A. N., III, p. 245 ; Tr., III, p. 352.

[132] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 339.

[133] Varadaraja, pupil of Bhattoji Diksita (A.D. 1600-60), refers to it. Bhartiya Vidya, Vol. V, No. 2, p. 28.

[134] Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 336 ; Storia, III, p. 55 ; *Ain*, II, p. 311.

[135] Though Humayun was 19 years older than Hamida at the time of marrying, she did not raise that question. She, however, objected to his tall stature. S. K. Banerji,, *Humayun Badshah*, Vol. II, 1941, p. 37.

[136] *Ain*, I, p. 277 ; Badauni, II, pp. 391-92 ; Tr., pp. 404-6.

however, that neither any social custom nor any statutory law prevented an old man from marrying a girl of tender years.

Widow marriages were not looked with favour in Hindu society. So the difference in age between a husband and wife became enormous when an old widower had no other choice than either to marry a girl of tender years or not to marry at all.[137]

Number of Wives

Monogamy was the rule among the generality of the Hindus,[138] who "would take to a second wife only if the first wife is sick or proves barren or if the children die."[139] Saint Tukaram, whose first wife was afflicted with asthma, had to be married again.[140] Abul Fazl[141] and Badauni,[142] besides several European travellers,[143] testify to it. Polygamy was, however, not unknown. Princes and the richer classes of men did indulge in it. But, as Mukundram notes, public opinion did not look upon it with favour.

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[137] Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 84.

[138] Hamilton, I, 159 ; Della Valle (Edward Grey), I, p. 83. Also see Herbert's *Travels*, p. 39. Guru Nanak also refers to monogamy when he writes to Kabir : "Father, dear it is God who arrangeth marriages. He maketh no mistakes and those whom He hath once joined, He joineth forever." Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 100.

[139] *Ain*, III, p. 311; Mandelslo, p. 52. A second wife is allowed if the first dies and the second is usually "a maid of the same race or tribe". (Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 248). Chaitanya remarried after the death of his first wife. *The Chaitanya Movement* by Melville T. Kennedy, p. 16. For Custom in Malabar, see Phillip's *Account of East India*, p. 27.

[140] J. R. A. S. Bombay, Vol. VII, p. 15.

[141] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 311.

[142] Badauni, II, p. 208 ; Tr. II, p. 212.

[143] Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 248 ; Mandelslo, p. 52 ; Stavorinus, I, p. 440 ; Della Valle (Edward Grey), I, p. 83 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 36 ; Hamilton, I, p. 159.

In spite of the freedom granted by their religion to marry "whatever woman you like, three and three, four and four,"[144] the common Muhammadan, it appears, preferred to have one wife.[145] Akbar was in favour of monogamy and considered it highly injurious to a man's health to have more than one wife.[146] He issued orders that a man of ordinary means should not possess more than one wife unless the first proved to be barren.[147] The wealthy people kept several wives[148] and sometimes even exceeded the prescribed limit of four fixed by the Prophet.[149] There were many discussions over this controversial issue in the *Ibadat Khana*[150] and the final decision reached by the ulemas was that a man might marry any number of wives by *mutah* but only five by *nikah*.[151]

Negotiations of Marriages

The selection of a match was left solely to the discretion of the parents.[152] The boy had little say while the girl, with the exception of upper class Rajput virgins, had none at all.[153]

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[144] Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 314. Of women who seem good in your eyes, marry two or three or four and if you still fear that ye shall not act equitably then one only or the slaves whom ye may have acquired." (*Quran*, *Surah* iv, 3). Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 86 ; E. R. E., V, p. 742 under Family (Muslim).

[145] Badauni, II, pp. 208-9 ; Tr. II, p. 212.

[146] *Ain* (Bloch), p. 277.

[147] Badauni, II, p. 356 ; Tr. II, p. 357.

[148] *Travels in India in the 17th Century* p. 185.

[149] Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 248.

[150] *Mutah* marriages were considered legal, according to Imam Malik but Imam Shafi looked upon them as illegal. Badauni, II, pp. 208-9 ; Tr., II, p. 212.

[151] Badauni, II, pp. 208-9 ; Tr., II, p. 212.

[152] Hamilton's *East Indies*, I, p. 159. Sometimes a sister would be married by her brother without the permission of the guardian, which was, however, disliked. T. A., II, p. 291.

[153] *Storia*, III, p. 55. Padmavati also refers to it. *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 148. In the absence of the parents or on their demise the nearest relations or intimate friends did the job.

Usually there were *Purohitanis* or female match-makers who knew of "all eligible parties and suitable matches" and could suggest many for selection.[154] Badauni calls such persons *qawwals*.[155] Chaitanya's marriage with Lakshmi Devi came through the mediation of the Brahman match-maker Banamali.[156] Rarely would a mother-in-law in Hindu families express a wish to see the prospective bride.[157] People in general and Muhammadans in particular married on "reports, interest and respects".[158] A liberal king like Akbar was of the opinion that the consent of the bride and the bridegroom and the permission of the parents should be essential before the confirmation of the marriage.[159] He appointed two Government officers, "sober and sensible men" called *Tuibegs*, to look into the circumstances of both parties.[160] A tax ranging from one *dam* to 10 *muhurs* according to the status of the parties was also charged by the Government.[161] Royal consent had to be obtained before a marriage amongst the children of the nobles could be arranged. As Khoja Barkhurdar, the eldest son of Nakshbandi, had been married to the daughter of Mahabat Khan without the King's knowledge, the Emperor felt greatly offended, sent for the young-man and had him thrown into prison.[162] It is interesting to note in this connection that the usual practice among the Mughal kings was not to marry their daughters. Aurangzeb, however, gave it up probably under the influence of Muslim *faqirs*[163] and got married two of his daughters Mihr-un-Nissa and Zubdat-un-Nissa.[164]

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[154] It is interesting to recall the incident of Humayun's marriage with Hamida Banu in this connection. Hamida, a girl of tender years, "resisted, discussed and disagreed for 40 days to a proposal for marriage from Humayun as the latter happened to be a tall person." The marriage ultimately came through the mediation of Dildar Begam. This was a very rare case when the childish objections of a minor girl were respected and only persuasions were applied to obtain her consent. This may be partly due to the fact that the girl was a relation of the Emperor and partly because of the instigation of Askari. For details refer to J. U. P. Hist. Soc., Vol. VII, Pt. I, Jan. 1934, pp. 36-41 and Journal Sind Historical Society, August 1940, Vol. IV, No. 4, pp. 149-99. When Hazrat Begam, the daughter of Muhammad Shah, reached her 16th year (February, 1756), Alamgir II who was 60 years old demanded her in marriage. The reply of the girl was : "I prefer death to such a marriage. I regard you as my father and you, too, should look upon me in the same light as your three daughters. If you use force, I shall kill myself." Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Calcutta, 1934, Vol. II, p. 4.

[155] Badauni, II, p. 62 ; Tr., II, pp. 60-61.

[156] Sanyal, *Chaitanya*, pp. 365-66. Jayasi refers to mediatory Pandits. *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 146.

[157] *Storia*, III, p. 155.

[158] *Ibid.*, p. 152.

[159] *Ain*, I (1873), p. 277.

[160] *Ibid.*, p. 278.

Expensive Weddings

Marriage has always been an expensive affair in India.[165] Hedges found the Muhammadan weddings very magnificent and expensive.[166] Grose, a later 18th century traveller, writes about the Indians' lavish expenditure on feasting, ornaments on their horses, processions, music, dancing girls, fireworks,"[167] etc. A Hindu of ordinary means, according to Bocarro, a 17th century traveller to Sind, would spend four or five thousand rupees on a marriage.[168] Grose saw some of the Bengali merchants spend about a lakh of rupees besides making innumerable presents.[169] The total expenditure on Dara's marriage came to be about Rs. 32 lakhs out of which 16 lakhs was contributed by Jahanara.[170]

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[161] *Ibid.*

[162] *Tatimma-i-Wakiat-i-Jahangiri* by Muhammad Hadi. E. & D. Vol. VI, pp. 396-97.

[163] Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, III, p. 55.

[164] *Ibid.* Arjumand Banu was 19 years and one month old when her marriage with Khurram took place. R and B., I, p. 224, f.n. 2. Mihr-un-Nissa and Zubdat un-Nissa, daughters of Aurangzeb, were married to Izad Baksh and Sipihr Shukoh at the ages of 12 and 23 years respectively. Irvine, *Later Mughals*, pp. 2-3 ; Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, Vol. III, p. 55.

[165] For contemporary accounts refer to 'A few literary glimpses of Social and Religious Life in Medieval Bengal', *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, January-March 1944, p. 92 ; Hedges' *Diary*, pp. cccx (Hak. edition) ; Antonio Bocarro's 'Description of Sind' translated and annotated by Fr. Achilles Meers, Journal Sind Historical Society, August 1949 ; Grose, I, pp. 234-35.

[166] Hedges' *Diary*, p. cccx.

[167] Grose, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 234-35.

The Marriage Ceremony

When both parties had agreed to enter into a matrimonial alliance the betrothal or *tilak* ceremony was celebrated.[171] An auspicious day was fixed for the marriage ceremony after consulting astrologers.[172] Humayun, when in exile and himself a great believer in astrology, took the astrolabe in his own hand, waited for the appointed time, summoned Mir Abul Baqa, one of his learned nobles and relation of the bride Hamida Banu and asked him to "bind fast the marriage bond".[173] Invitations were issued (by Hindus) on palm leaves dyed with saffron to mark the jubilation and the solemnity of the auspicious occasion.[174] We shall now briefly survey the Hindu and Muhammadan rituals separately.

Hindu Marriage Rituals

(a) ***The Procession.*** It is difficult to give a comprehensive description of the marriage ceremonies among Hindus which differ from caste to caste, from tribe to tribe and from province to province.[175] But religious and social conservatism is so strong in India that the outlines of the *Samskaras*, as Abul Fazl notes, are observed in much the same manner everywhere as in Vedic times. Abul Fazl refers to 8 forms of marriages[176] recognized by the *Smritis* but *Brahmya*[177] form seems to have been the most in vogue. It was essential for the bride to put on bracelets of red colour.[178] Tulsidas refers to the ceremony of binding round the wrist of the bridegroom a piece of cloth containing minute particles of different things which is taken off after the marriage on an auspicious day with due ceremonies.[179] A *mandapa* was set up in the bride's house.[180] Jayasi[181] and Manucci[182] give a description of the arbour which, as the latter says, "is essential for everybody from the king down to a shepherd."[183] It was decorated with wedding wreaths of flowers and festoons of mango leaves were hung before its doors. When the relatives and friends had gathered and necessary preparations for the marriage had been made, the richly clad bridegroom with a veil of gold net hanging down from his head,[184] seated on a gorgeously caprisoned and beautifully decorated horse and supported by a grown-up man seated behind him, started for the house of the bride.[185] His relatives and friends in their best attire either followed him on foot or in coaches according to their status.[186] Ladies, too, accompanied the procession usually in palanquins.[187] Hindus would put on yellow clothes on such an auspicious occasion.[188] Several European travellers have described the glamour of an Indian procession which was headed by a musical party with "drums and wind instruments and some mixed pastimes to increase the merriments."[189] Della Valle was much attracted by these oddly clothed bandmen whose bodies above the girdle were all painted and who decorated themselves with bracelets and necklaces of gold, silver and flowers, the skirts or their multi-coloured turbans trailing behind them.[190] Torches, lamps and candles usually preceded a procession at night.[191] As the procession moved on, it was usual to let off bombs and fireworks and "cast squibs and crackers into the air."[192] On arriving at the destination, the party was heartily welcomed by the bride's people and accommodated in well-decorated and furnished rooms.[193] They were served with sumptuous meals according to the host's position.[194] While Malik Muhammad Jayasi[195] and Tulsidas[196] describe the meals served at a prince's wedding, Manucci[197] confines himself to those provided by a common man.

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[168] Journal Sind Historical Society, August 1940. The well-to-do would spend about forty or fifty thousand rupees.

[169] Grose, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 234-35.

[170] Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, p. 14.

[171] *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 140.

[172] *Ibid.*, p. 141 ; *Storia*, III, p. 59 ; Bartolomeo, p. 273 ; Bernier, pp. 161-62 ; *Tulsi's Ramayana*, p. 150. Hindus as well as Muhammadans consider some months to be inauspicious. Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali, *Observations on the Mussalmauns of India*, I, pp. 352-53.

[173] J. U. P. Hist. Soc., Vol. VII, Pt. I, January 1934.

[174] *Storia*, III, p. 59.

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[175] T. V. Mahalingam, *Social Life Under Vijayanagar*, University of Madras, 1940.

[176] *Ain*, III, pp. 338-39.

[177] Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 375.

[178] Macauliffe, I, p. 145.

[179] *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 175.

[180] *Storia*, III, p. 62 ; *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 147 ; *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 158 ; *Sur Sagar*, I, p. 631.

[181] *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 147.

[182] *Storia*, III, p. 62.

[183] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

[184] Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 14-15.

[185] For a picturesque description of a contemporary marriage procession refer to *Storia*, III, pp. 150-51 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 83 ; Della Valle, I (ed. 1664), pp. 430-31 ; Mandelslo,

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p. 62 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 248. For a wedding procession refer to Plate LXII of the Catalogue of Indian Collection in Boston Museum, Pt. VI by Coomaraswamy.

[186] Della Valle (edition 1664), pp. 430-31.

[187] *Jahangir's India*, p. 83.

[188] Careri refers to their "vests and civas dyed in *zafran*". Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 248.

[189] Della Valle (edition 1664), pp. 430-31 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

[190] Della Valle, II (ed. Edward Grey), p. 428.

[191] Bartolomeo, p. 280.

[192] *Storia*, III, pp. 150-51 ; Mandelslo, p. 62.

[193] *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 153 ; *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 144.

[194] *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse,) pp. 157, 162 ; *Storia*, III, p. 57.

[195] *Padumavat* (Urdu), pp. 145-47.

[196] *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), pp. 157, 162.

[197] *Sieria*, III, p. 57.

(b) *The Nuptials.* After such preliminary ceremonies[198] as presentation of garments for the bride,[199] etc. the principal marriage rituals commenced at a fixed hour in the booth where the pair had been brought and seated on a raised platform.[200] A fairly comprehensive account of the marriage rituals may be found in the *Padumavat*,[201] *Ram Charit Manas*[202] and *Sur Sagar*.[203] The narrations of the European travellers, usually based on hearsay, are not reliable.[204] Of these rituals which are long and tedious, the most important and widespread were the solemn handing over of the maiden by her father (*kanyadana*), the joining of the right hand of the bride and bridegroom (*panigrahana*) respectively, the recitation of the Vedic formulae including speech by the bridegroom to the bride assenting to their unity, the offering of libations in the fire, and the threefold circumambulation of the fire, the seven steps taken together by the wedded pair and, finally, the taking away of the bride to her new home by the bridegroom.[205] The bride and bridegroom would also put garlands around each other's neck.[206] Manucci[207] and Bartolomeo[208] refer to the Malabari custom of tying a little piece of gold called *tali*[209] by the bridegroom around the neck of the bride. It was usual for all respectable persons present to touch the *tali* before it was passed on to the bridegroom.[210] Jayasi refers to the practice of applying turmeric paste to the bodies of the bride and bridegroom which was removed after the conclusion of the marriage.[211]

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[198] Altekar, *Position of Women*, pp. 94-95 ; Ishuree Dass, *Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindoos*, pp. 180-81. For the detailed accounts of the ceremonies refer to Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-57 ; Thomas, *Hindu Religion, Customs and Manners*, pp. 92-93 ; Sinclair Stevenson, *Rites of the Twice Born*, pp. 46-95 ; Dubois, I, pp. 208-37 ; *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. VIII, pp. 450-51 ; Sarkar, *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 605. For contemporary versions refer to *Ramayana of Tulsidas*, pp. 156-58, 175 ; *Padumavat* (Urdu), pp. 141-49 ; *Sur Sagar op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 631-32 ; *Ain*, III, 307-8. Chaitanya's biography written several years after his death may not contain a reliable account of the rituals. Refer to *Shree Krishna Chaitanya*, Vol. I, by Nisikanta Sanyal Bhaktishastri, Pub. Tridandi Swami Bhakti, 1933, pp. 368-69. For a few references in Tukaram's verses see *Psalms of Maratha Saints* by Nicol Macnicol, pp. 56-58. For European travellers' contemporary accounts refer to Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Storia, III, pp. 55, 62, 150-51 ; Hamilton's *East Indies*, I, p. 159 ; *Jahangir's India* by Pelsaert, p. 82 ; Grose, I, pp. 234-35 ; Della Valle (1664), pp. 430-31; Careri (Sen), p. 248 ; Bartolomeo, p. 280 ; Mandelslo, p. 62.

[199] Called *vari* in Punjab.

[200] *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 158.

[201] *Padumavat* (Urdu), pp. 147-49.

[202] *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), pp. 156-58.

[203] *Sur Sagar*, I, pp. 631-32 ; II, pp. 1665, 1671, 1678.

[204] For accounts of European travellers refer to f.n. 198 above.

(c) ***Gifts and Presents.*** Reference may be made here to another ceremony called *tamol*[212] in which presents are offered in cash, gold, clothes by bride's father to the bridegroom and some of his relatives at a joint meeting of the two parties.[213] As a gesture of goodwill to his Hindu subjects Akbar is said to have ordained that the village officials should present two *narials* (coconuts) one on their own behalf and the other on behalf of the Mughal Emperor to the parties.[214] The Bhat would stand up and exclaim :—

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[205] E. R. E., VIII, pp. 450-51 ; *Padumavat* (Urdu), pp. 147-48 ; *Ain*, III (Sarkar), pp. 337-42 ; *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), pp. 157, 162.

[206] *Padumavat* (Urdu), p, 148.

[207] *Storia*, III, pp. 54, 63.

[208] Bartolomeo, pp. 273, 281 ; Dubois, I, pp. 226-27.

[209] M. N. Srinivas (Marriage and Family in Mysore, Bombay, 1942, p. 75) describes *tali* as a small plate of gold with a domelike eruption in the middle crowned by a ruby. It is considered to prolong the life of the husband. Dubois, I, pp. 226-27.

[210] *Storia*, III, p. 63.

[211] *Padumavat* (Urdu), p. 162.

[212] It has been described in the last paragraph, Pt. I, Punjab Civil Code (ed. 1854).

[213] Journal Punjab Historical Society, Vol. X, pp. 1-3.

[214] The custom was in vogue in the Utradhi also Dakhna and Dahra Sects of Arora community of Multan. *Ibid.*

Akbar Shah Badshah de ghar da narial
Raja Todar Mal Tanan de ghar da narial
Misr Chhabildas Brahman de ghar da narial
Kishne Mangle de ghar da narial
Rain Ram Prithvipat Narule de ghàr da narial.[215]

Tulsidas refers to the interesting sport of mess of rice-milk indulged in during the marriage.[216]

(d) ***Simplified Nuptials.*** Sometimes the marriage was celebrated in a simpler way. The bride and the bridegroom together with a priest, a cow and a calf were taken to the waterside, the Brahman holding a white cloth 14 yards in length and a basket crossbound with diverse things in it. The bridegroom held the hand of the priest, the bride that of her husband and all held the cow by the tail. Water was poured on the cow's tail and they went round the cow and the calf which were handed over to the priest together with some money.[217]

Muhammadan Weddings

Muhammadan weddings[218] have been described at some length by the European travellers Pelsaert,[219] Thevenot[220] and Manucci.[221] Scattered references to the marriages of the princes are also available in the Persian chronicles[222] of the period. The marriage celebrations which, according to Pelsaert, lasted from three to four days, began with the sending of *sachaq*(four precious gifts usually along with the red dye) for the bride.[223] Fruits and sweetmeats arranged in beautiful trays together with some cash were also sent.[224] Rupees fifty thousand were sent by Jahangir as *sachaq* on the marriage of Khurram with the daughter of Muzaffar Husain.[225] The gifts would be carried to her house by a party of the bridegroom's friends, accompanied with music.[226] Ladies of the royal household, the mother, sister and paternal aunts of the late Empress (Mumtaz Mahal) took *sachaq* worth about two lakhs of rupees to the house of the bride on Dara's marriage.[227] The actual wedding celebrations came off after a few months when the *hennabandi* ceremony was performed, with due rituals.[228] The groom's hands, according

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[215] A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Emperor Akbar.
A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Raja Todar Mal Tanan.
A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Misr Chhabildas.
A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Kishne Mangle.
A coconut of (or sent by) the house of Rain Ram Prithvipat Narule.

Journal Panjab Hist. Soc. Vol. X, pp. 1-3. The Khatris of Bahawalpur also observed this custom (Bahawalpur Gazetteer, 1904, p. 114). But since 1922, on account of Hindu-Muslim tensions, they changed one sentence "Akbar Shah Badshah de ghar da narial." J. P. Hist. Soc. Vol. X, p. 3.

[216] *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 161.

[217] Purchas' *India*, p. 9. For Nayar's marriage customs refer to *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. V, pp. 13-14. Sometimes the bride's price was paid. See Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 257. For marriage customs of Korkus of the forest villages of Melghat refer to J. R. A. S. B. Letters, Vol. XII, 1946, No. 2.

[218] For modern works refer to Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 318 ; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 56-88 ; E. R. E., Vol. VII,

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pp. 815-69. Mrs Meer Husain Ali *Observations on the Mussulmauns of India*, pp. 367-69. According to the Quran and the traditions marriage depends on three facts, the assent of the parties, the evidence of two witnesses and the marriage settlement. If any of these are wanting, the marriage is void. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 79. For a beautiful painting refer to Shivalal, *Studies in Indian Painting*, p. 107, Plate No. 48.

[219] *Jahangir's India*, p. 82.

[220] Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, pp. 31-33.

[221] *Storia*, III, p. 152.

[222] R and B., I, pp. 159, 224-25 ; *Padshahnama*, I, A, pp. 328, 453 ; Qanungo : *Dara Shukoh*, p. 14.

[223] *Jahangir's India*, p. 82.

[224] *Ibid.* "Amongst the bride's presents with *mehndi* may be noticed everything requisite for a full-dress suit for the bridegroom, and the etcetras of his toilette, confectionery, dried fruits, preserves, the prepared pawns, and a multitude of trifles too tedious to enumerate." Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 319.

[225] R & B., I, p. 159.

[226] Herklots' *Islam*, p. 70.

[227] Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 14-15.

[228] *Ibid.*

to custom, were dyed red with *henna*[229] (*Lawsonia alba*) by ladies concealed behind the curtain. The hands of the guests were also stained with the auspicious *henna*. They returned after receiving suitable presents.[230]

The hands of the bridegroom were washed with rose-water after an hour when he would drink, according to Manucci, a glass of water in confirmation of the marriage.[231] The rest of the ceremonials in connection with the *niqah* are invariably performed by the *Qazi*[232] or his deputy who would appoint two men of full ages as witnesses.[233] Then follow the usual ceremonies, the formal consent of the bride to the match, the recitation by the bridegroom of the usual prayers, the *Astaghfarul-lah*,[234] the four *Quls*, the *Kalima*, the *Sifat-i-Imam*, and the *Dua-i-qunut*[235] etc. and the announcement of the *mehr* or marriage settlement,[236] which was of great importance. Hindal was not agreeable to the marriage of Hamida Banu with Humayun as the latter, being in exile, was not in a position to fix a proper *maash*[237] (subsistence allowance). Shahjahan fixed as *kalin* of the bride the same amount, viz., rupees five lakhs, which he had promised to Mumtaz.[238] A chapter from the Quran invoking God's blessings on the couple would conclude the marriage rituals.[239]

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[229] With this is usually combined the rubbing with *haldi* or turmeric. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 66.

[230] *Ibid*. *Kamarbands* were offered to the guests on Dara's marriage.

[231] *Storia*, III, p. 152.

[232] Qazi Muhammad Ishan officiated at the marriage ceremony of Dara. Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 14-15.

[233] Herklots' *Islam*, p. 74; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam* p. 318. *Badshahnama* refers to the prevalent custom that the father of the bride was not expected to be present at the time of the *nikah*. *Badshahnama*, I, Pt. II, p. 270.

[234] I.e., "I claim forgiveness from God." Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 318.

[235] *Ibid*., p. 318 ; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 75-76.

[236] *Storia*, III, p. 152. This term originally meant the price which was paid to the *wali* (guardian) of the bride. E. R. E., VII, p. 865. For details refer to *ibid*., pp. 865-66 ; *ibid*., Vol. V, p. 743.

[237] J. U. P. Hist. Soc., Vol. VII, Pt. I, Jan. 1934, p. 38. Hindal is reported to have said, "Heaven forbid, there should not be

Dowry

Dowry system was rather rigorously observed in Mughal days. Several European travellers have referred to this custom[240] which was harsh to the poor[241] who found it difficult to get their daughters married on account of their inability to pay handsome dowries.[242] Sometimes a poor father had not the means to procure even a wedding outfit for his daughter.[243] Tukaram could get her daughters married only through the contribution of the villagers.[244] Ballabhacharya was hesitant

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a proper *maash* and that so a cause of annoyance should arise." *Ibid.* Rs. Two lakhs were paid by Humayun as *mehr. Ibid.*, pp. 36-41. According to another version Humayun gave 3 lakhs of ready cash for the dower. J. Sind Hist. Soc. August, 1940, Vol. IV, No 4. For another controversial point whether the above-mentioned sum was given as a dower or as a fee to the Qazi, Mir Abul Baqa, refer to f.n. 3 of S. K. Banerji, *Humayun Badshah*, Vol. II, p. 37.

[238] Qanungo, *Dara Shukoh*, pp. 14-15. On Salim's marriage with the daughter of Raja Bhagwan Dass, Akbar fixed a sum of two *krors* of *tangahs* as the marriage settlement. (T. A., II, p. 599 ; A. N., Bev., pp. 677-78). *Maasir*, I, p. 404, writes two *krors* of rupees.

[239] Mandelslo, p. 62 ; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 77-78.

[240] Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 248 ; Mandelslo, p. 62 ; *Storia*, III, p. 152 ; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Bartolomeo, p. 272.

[241] Macauliffe, I, p. 145 ; J. R. A. S. (Bombay), III, p. 15 ; Sanyal, *Chaitanya*, p. 366.

[242] Bartolomeo, p. 272 ; J. P. U. Hist. Soc. Vol. V., April 1938, p. 27.

[243] Macauliffe, I, p. 145. A man in straitened circumstances appealed to Guru Nanak to procure a wedding outfit for her daughter. *Ibid.*

[244] Tukaram in J. R. A. S. (Bombay), III, p. 15.

to let her daughter be engaged to Chaitanya as he was poor and not in a position to pay handsome dowry[245] which might include, in a middle-class family, household articles of various kinds, utensils, clothes, gold or silver ornaments.[246] Huge dowries have been referred to by Jayasi,[247] Tulsidas,[248] and Surdas[249] in addition to several travellers. On the marriage of Salim, for instance, Raja Bhagwan Das, the father of the bride Man Bai, gave in dowry several strings of Persian, Arab, Turkish and Cutch horses together with one hundred elephants and many male and female slaves—Abyssinian, Circassian and Indian—besides all sorts of vessels of gold and other costly stuff. He offered to each of the *amirs* present Persian, Turkish and Arabian horses with gold saddles.[250] Sometimes whole villages were granted in dowry.[251] Akbar was, no doubt, against high dowries,[252] but he made no effort, it seems, to check this evil practice. It will be interesting to relate that Princess Zinat-un-Nisa who loved a maiden's life, begged the amount of her dowry from her father and spent it in building a mosque at Delhi known as Kumari Masjid.[253]

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[245] Sanyal, *Chaitanya*, p. 366.

[246] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 281.

[247] *Padumavat* (Urdu), pp. 148, 203.

[248] *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 159, "The enormous dowry was beyond description—gold and jewels, shawls, robes, and silks of all kinds in the greatest profusion and of immense value, elephants, chariots, horses, men servants and cows with gilded horns and hoofs." *Ibid.*

[249] *Sur Sagar*, II, p. 1664.

[250] *Maasir*, I, p. 404 ; T. A., II, p. 599 ; A. N., III (Bev.), pp. 677-78 ; Badauni, II, pp. 342-43 ; Tr., II, pp. 353-54.

[251] For an earlier reference in Tamil refer to Saletore's *Vijayanagar*, Vol. II, pp. 188-89.

[252] *Ain* (Bloch), I, p. 278 ; Bartolomeo (p. 272) a little later laments the lot of those parents whose daughters could not be married as they could not afford to pay high dowries.

[253] Sarkar's, *Aurangzib*, III, p. 54.

SECTION III

FUNERAL CEREMONIES

Hindu Funeral Ceremonies

Antyesti or the funeral ceremonies are of great importance to the Hindu to whom the value of the next world is higher than that of the present one.[254] Of the huge mass of prescriptions to be found in the published and unpublished texts or of the variations presented by the usuage of different schools of worship and families we may enumerate the most important ones,[255] viz., cremation, *Udakakarma, Asaucha, Asthi Sanchayana, Santikarma* and *Sapindikaran* which are common to different parts of this sub-continent.

Cremation[256] or burning of the dead body was the most recognized mode of the disposal of the corps during the Mughal period. It was motivated, according to Terry[257] and Ovington,[258] by a desire to avoid the "corpse being devoured by worms and putrefaction." Abul Fazl enumerates certain classes to whom this privilege was denied.[259] In special circumstances, if wood and water were not available, Hindu lawgivers allowed the corpse to be buried.[260] But in Assam[261] and Malabar[262] burial proper seems to have been quite common. Inhumation (burial proper), preferably water burial, was, however, resorted to,[263] as prescribed by the scriptures,[264] in the case of small children usually under three[265] and ascetics[266] who did not stand in need of purification.[267]

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[254] The Baudhayana Pitremedha Sutras says : "It is well-known that through the *Samskaras* after birth one conquers earth, through the *Samskaras* after death the heaven." Quoted in Pandey's, *Hindu Samskaras*, p. 407 ; E. R. E. IV, p. 476.

[255] Caland divides the whole ceremonial into 114 acts not to speak of variations in each of these. For details refer to *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IV, pp. 476-78 ; Sinclair Stevenson *Rites of the Twice Born*, pp. 136 ff and Pandey, *op. cit.*

[256] The earliest literary mention of the funeral ceremonies is found in the Rigveda and Atharvaveda. Also see Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 421. Cremation is regarded as offering into the sacred fire conducting the corpse to heaven as a sacrificial gift. (A. G. S. IV, 1-2 ; Bh G. S. 1.2) quoted in Pandey *op. cit.*, p. 443.

[257] *Early Travels*, p. 323.

[258] Ovington, p. 342. Also see Herbert's *Travels*, p. 46.

[259] Abul Fazl enumerates the following classes which were not allowed to be cremated : "Those who disbelieve the Vedas,

Last Functions

The rituals commenced, as related by Abul Fazl, from the moment a person was in *articulo mortis* when he would be lifted from the cot and carefully placed on the ground[268] rubbed all

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or who are not bound by the rules of any of the four castes nor a thief, nor a woman who has murdered her husband nor an evil liver nor a drunkard." *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355. Manucci excludes the infamous sect of the lingam who bury the bodies. Storia, III, p. 71.

[260] Or thrown into water. Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 34.

[261] *Tavernier's Travels* (Crookes edited), p. 219. Also see *Ibid*, f.n. 1 and f.n. 2, and E. T. Dalton's *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal*, p. 9. Recent archaeological discoveries give us information about the burial of the dead. But their chronology is disputed. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 412.

[262] J. T. P. Phillips writes in *Religion and Manners and Learning ......of Malabar* (1717), p. 35 : "They are buried in a sitting posture with the baby lifted up as if they were in an act of devotion which they call *Tschimadu*." Also see Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

[263] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355; *Storia*, IV, p. 441.

[264] Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 417.

[265] Mandleslo, p. 55 ; under two years, Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 34 ; Abul Fazl is more specific when he writes that dead bodies of all children yet not teethed and ascetics were either buried or plunged into flowing water. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355.

[266] Realized mendicants, *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355.

[267] For details of children's burial refer to Siñclair Stevenson, *Rites of the Twice Born*, p. 201; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 417.

[268] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354. "The belief is that if a person

over with cow-dung and strewn with green grass,[269] with the head pointing to the north and the feet to the south.[270] Abul Fazl wrongly reverses the position.[271] Holy Ganges water[272] along with a ruby, pearl or gold was poured into his mouth while sectarian marks were drawn on his forehead and a *tulsi* leaf (*ocymum sanctum*) was placed on his breast.[273] The gift of a cow—to act as his conductor over the stream marking the boundary of the other world[274]—in addition to several sorts of edibles[275] is regarded as very auspicious for his further welfare. The omission of any reference by Abul Fazl and others to the burning of a *diya* by the side of the sick man is surprising.[276] A curious custom called *Antarjali* referred to by Careri,[277] Tavernier[278] and Della Valle,[279] corroborating Abul Fazl,[280] was sometimes followed particularly in Bengal.[281] A person in a dying condition would be carried to a nearby river

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were to die on a bed-stead, he would return after death as an evil spirit since the bed-stead is high up from the ground with space between earth and sky which demons inhabit." Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[269] Usually *durbha* grass, barley and sesamum grains are scattered on the ground plastered with cow-dung and sprinkled over with Ganges water. Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[270] *Storia*, III, p. 72 ; Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

[271] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354.

[272] Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45 ; Samuel Purchas' *India*, p. 2.

[273] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354.

[274] *Ibid.* It is only by holding the tail of a cow that the dying man hopes to cross the horrible river of blood and filth called *Vaitarani*. Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

[275] For details refer to Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 476 ; Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-41.

[276] For reference to this custom see Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

[277] Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

[278] Tavernier, Chapter VII, p. 168.

[279] Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 435.

[280] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354.

[281] It is still prevalent in some parts of that province. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 431.

where the lower half of his body[282] would be immersed in water at the moment of his death.[283] The usual Indian lamentation would follow, the females standing in a customary circle and beating their naked breasts and singing doleful songs.[284] Guru Nanak refers to the Indian custom of tearing the top of a letter when announcing the death of a relative.[285] There would be no such lamentation at the death of an aged person. Della Valle, Petermundy, Ovington and Manucci have described in detail the great merry making and feasting which took place on such an occasion[286] as he "hath so well performed his time and arrived to such a good age."[287]

Cremation Rites

The preparations for the cremation started immediately after death as, according to the Hindu belief, it was essential for the salvation of the soul of the deceased that the corpse should be disposed of as early as possible.[288] After the usual purificatory ceremonies like painting of nails, shaving of hair,[289] etc., the body was given a cold bath (known as *Abhisinchana ceremony*) and wrapped in a new sheet or suit,[290] the colour of which differed according to the age, sex, position and other circumstances.[291] The corpse of a married woman, according to Abul Fazl, was dressed in her usual daily robes.[292] Sandal-wood paste, white clay, jasmine oil mixed with saffron, essence of roses etc. were used for his or her last toilet, in accordance with the deceased's means.[293]

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[282] Tavernier, Chapter VII, p. 168, says up to the chin.

[283] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 354. Ralph Fitch relates another interesting incident: "If a man or woman be sick and like to die they will lay him before their idol and he shall help him. Failing which he will take it to the riverside and set him on the raft made of weed." *Early Travels*, p. 22.

[284] *Storia*, III, p. 72; *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 458.

[285] Macauliffe, Vol. I, p. 115. "Those whose letters hath been torn in God's court must die, my brethren." *Ibid.*

[286] Della Valle, Vol. II (Ed. Grey), p. 271; Petermundy, II, p. 220; Ovington, p. 243; *Storia*, III, p. 156.

[287] Petermundy, II, p. 220.

[288] Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 34. In Malabar the body of the king must be burnt within three days after his death. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 288.

[289] Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 439.

[290] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355; Tavernier, Chapter VII, p. 168; Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45; Alberuni, II, p. 169.

The funeral procession which started for the cremation ground, usually situated near a river bank,[294] was headed by the chief mourners ; the bier[295] (made of sandal-wood in the case of the rich)[296] shouldered by four persons followed it.[297] A musical band, however, headed the funeral procession of an aged person and conches were blown.[298] Relatives and friends followed the corpse bareheaded and barefooted, crying "Ram Ram".[299] The carrying of the fire brand kindled from the domestic fire[300] did not escape the notice of an astute observer like Della Valle.[301]

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[291] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355 writes white sheet of fine linen. Mrs. Sinclair writes as follows : "A middle-aged man is wrapped in red, a dearly loved youngman in red brocade, a married woman usually in a gaily coloured garment but a widow invariably in white, blue or black cloth." Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

[292] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 355.

[293] *Storia*, III, pp. 72, 155. If a woman died before her husband, she is considered so lucky that her face and especially her forehead is smeared with red. Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

[294] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 356 ; *Storia*, III, p. 71 ; Tavernier, Chapter VII, p. 168 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249 ; Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 435.

[295] Cot is usually made of bamboo though it should be of *udumbara* wood (*Fieus Glemarata*). Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 432

[296] *Storia*, III, p. 155.

[297] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 294 ; *Storia*, III, p. 72.

[298] *Storia*, III, p. 156 ; Petermundy, II, p. 220 ; Della Valle, II (ed. Grey), p. 271 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

[299] Ovington, p. 342. Also see Petermundy, II, p. 220.

[300] Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 434.

[301] Della Valle, II (ed. Grey), p. 271.

The kind of wood used, the size and the orientation of the pyres and the details relating to them are regulated by sacred texts and nothing is left to the whims of the mourners.[302] Ordinary wood was used for the pyre of a commoner while sandal and *lignum aloes* was employed by the rich.[303] Ghee was put into the eyes, nostrils, ears, etc. of the deceased before it was set fire to by his nearest male relation—oldest son, or youngest brother in case of a female, and husband in case of a wife.[304] The mourners would now retire,[305] leaving a few professional persons called *Bettiao* (*Battyai*) or burners who employed sticks etc. to help the body to be burnt completely.[306] After the *Udakakarma* ceremony[307] which consisted in offering of water to the deceased and purifactory bath,[308] the relatives returned home chewing leaves of *pichumanda* (*Azadirechta indica*) or the *neem* tree before entering the door.[309] The sons and grandsons of the deceased[310] and the widow, too, if she survived her husband, would get their heads shaved.[311]

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[302] Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 439.

[303] Herbert's *Travels*, p. 451. Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 229 ; *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 257 ; Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

[304] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 393. For details also see Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 228.

[305] *Storia*, III, p. 73.

[306] *Ibid.*, p. 154.

[307] For details refer to Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 447.

[308] *Storia*, III, p. 73. On hearing the death of Dasrath, Rama and all his people took a bath in the stream. *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 293. All the relatives of the dead down to the seventh or tenth generation bathe in the nearest stream and purify themselves by it. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 447.

[309] *Ibid.*, p. 448. Other prescriptions are rinse the mouth, touch water, fire, cow-dung, etc., inhale the smoke of a certain species of wood, tread upon stone and then enter. E. R. E., IV, p. 478. These are supposed to act as a barrier to the inauspicious spirit of the dead and symbolize the severance of relations with the deceased. Pandey, *op. cit.*, p. 448.

[310] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p 355.

[311] *Early Travels*, p. 217. She would abstain from putting on ornaments and luxurious garments until her death. *Ibid.*

The subjects would do likewise on the death of a kind ruler.[312]

Mourning Observances

Asaucha (uncleanliness) period varied from one to ten days[313] and even months[314] according to caste, age, sex, relationship and also circumstances and usages of different schools.[315] John Nieuhof describes in detail the mourning observances as followed in Malabar on the death of a king.[316] The generality of the Hindus, it appears, followed the prescribed rules which forbid certain things during this period of defilement such as the cutting of the hair and beard, study of the Vedas, offerings to deities, etc.[317] The positive rules, which enjoin for a period of three days, continence; sleeping on the ground, living on begged or purchased food, eating only in the daytime, were also observed.[318] All the earthen vessels in the house were broken up and thrown away. Gaudy dresses were avoided and the women covered their heads with white dopattas as a sign of mourning.[319] Various charitable acts as setting free of oxen purchased from the market, bestowing of milch cows and heifers to the poor etc. were also performed.[320]

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[312] *Storia,* III, p. 72 Recently about 40,000 people offered themselves for hair-cut on the death of their ruler, the Raja of Gwalior.

[313] *Ain,* III (Sarkar), p. 357 ; Herbert's *Travels,* p. 45 ; Nieuhoff *Voyages,* p. 228 mentions 13 days.

[314] Pandey, *op. cit.,* p. 450.

[315] *Ibid.*

[316] Nieuhoff's *Voyages,* p. 228 ; *Asiatick Researches,* Vol. V, p. 12.

[317] *Ain,* III (Sarkar), p. 356 ; Ovington, p. 243 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century,* p. 294. On the death of Dasrath, Bharat gave to Brahmans abundant gifts, cows, horses, elephants, all kinds of carriages, thrones, jewels, robes, grain, lands, money, houses, for his purification. *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 257.

[318] *Ain,* III (Sarkar), p. 356. According to Herbert (p. 45) during these ten days they would "neither use wife, nor laugh nor take opium or betel, put on no clean clothes nor oyle one's head." Also refer to Conti's *Travel in India in the 15th Century,* p. 25 and *Asiatick Researches,* Vol. V, p. 12. The women passed this period in singing mournful songs, crying, scattering and pulling their hair, then singing again etc. and off and on beating their breasts in company

Sanchayana or the ceremony of collection of bones and ashes would take place with due rites, after an interval varying from four to ten days according to different castes.[321] The bones would be washed in milk,[322] deposited in an urn or a bag of deer skin,[323] and thrown into a river[324] preferably in the Ganges.[325] It was the practice to make daily an offering usually of rice cooked in milk to the deceased[326] from the cremation day till the 10th or 12th day when the food ceremony of *Pitramedha*[327] (*Sapindikaran* or uniting the *Preta* with the

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of female friends, relatives and neighbours, Petermundy, II, p. 220 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 294. Rama fasted the whole day on hearing the death of his father. *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 293.

[319] Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi*, Pt. I (English Translation), p. 77 ; Herbert's *Travels* p. 45.

[320] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 294.

[321] On the fourth day after the death of a Brahman, the fifth after the death of a Kshatriya, the ninth and tenth after that of a Vaisya and Sudra respectively. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 356.

[322] "In order to cool the soul of the deceased", according to Manucci. Storia, III, p. 154.

[323] *Sroria*, III, p. 154 ; Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 294 ; Della Valle (1664 ed.), p. 435 ; Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 227.

[324] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 356. Herbert's *Travels*, p. 45. Alberuni, II, p. 169. Also refer to *Islamic Culture*, July 1934, p. 430.

[325] *Storia*, III, p. 154 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 249 ; Della Valle (1674), p. 435 ; Alberuni, II, p. 169.

[326] *Ramayana* (Growse), p. 257 ; Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 227.

[327] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 357. It is supposed to nourish the soul of the deceased who is regarded as still living in a sense and the efforts of the survivors are to provide him with food and guide his footsteps to the paramount abode of the dead. Pandey, *op. cit.*, pp. 464-75 ; E.R.E. p. 810.

Pitaras) would be usually performed. Then the soul of the deceased is said to have reached its heavenly abode. Manucci refers to the custom of offering a petticoat to the widow by each of the relatives and some cash, ornaments, and clothes by brothers on the 13th day when the period of mourning ended.[328] *Sraddha*,[329] which Abul Fazl describes as the charity given in the name of the deceased, was observed usually on the anniversary of the deceased's death.[330] Jahangir also refers to this practice which was according to the Emperor one of the standing rules and customs in Hindustan.[331] Its significance and mode of performance has been described at some length in the *Ain*.[332] Four or five Brahmans would be properly fed and money and dresses and gifts in kind would be bestowed on them in the name of the deceased.[333] Tukaram would not forego this solemn ceremony even though there was not a penny in home.[334] It was thought more efficacious[335] if the ceremony could be performed at a shrine like Gaya, etc.

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[328] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p 357. For details of this ceremony refer to E.R.E., Vol. IV, p. 479. According to Hindu belief when the natural body dies, the soul takes a subtle form which they call *Preta*. This is properly the spirit of the deceased which meets its *Pitaras* after the obsequial rites are performed. E.R.E., II, p. 810.

[329] *Storia*, III, p. 73. Tukaram also refers to this ceremony. J.R.A.S., Bombay Branch, Vol. III, p. 19.

[330] To feed the ancestors to propitiate or keep them away or to summon their aid are the purposes served by the *Sraddhas* described in ritual and law. E.R.E., Vol. IV, p. 479.

[331] *Tuzuk* (R & B), I, pp. 246-47.

[332] Abul Fazl adds the following days. Also on the first day of the first quarter of the new moon, on the 6th lunar day of the month of *Kuar*, and bestowing charity in a place of worship in the name of the deceased. *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 307. Also see Sinclair Stevenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-81.

[333] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), pp. 307-8 ; J. R. A. S., Bombay Branch, Vol. III, p. 19.

[334] "I shall go and procure some vegetables. We shall cook them." J.R.A.S., Bombay Branch, Vol, III, p. 19.

[335] Melville Kennedy, *The Chaitanya Movement*, p. 18.

Muhammadan Funeral Ceremonies

Funeral ceremonies of the Muhammadans vary little in different parts of the Muslim world and are almost similar for men and women.[336] Most of the rituals are based on the traditions of the Prophet but two customs, the wailing of women and the recital of the praises of the dead, are observed in direct defiance to his commands.[337] No detailed account of the rituals is traceable in the contemporary works of the period. It is certain, however, from the few and scattered references to be found here and there in the accounts of foreign travellers that these ceremonies must have been observed in much the same manner as they are today. The curious reader may refer to the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (Vol. IV, pp. 501 ff.) for details.

Muhammadans are great believers in *fal* and often resort to this practice. The Quran or the Diwan of Khwaja Hafiz Shirazi is consulted for the purpose. During the last illness of Aurangzeb, Mohammad Akhlas took out the following *fal* from the Diwan of Shirazi :

برسر تربت ما چوں گزری—کہ زیارت گہ رندان جہاں خوادر

It was regarded ominous by the Emperor.[338] The *Yasin* chapter of the Quran (or Chapter XXXVI) is read by the sickbed of the dying person and his face is usually turned towards *qibla* (direction of Mecca).[339] Sharbat or holy water from the zamzam well at Mecca, if available, may be poured down his throat to "facilitate exit of vital spark."[340]

Manner of announcing great man's death

Death is announced by using certain euphemism specially in the case of great men. Emperor Babar "departed from the fleeting world for the everlasting abode in paradise."[341] A special procedure had to be followed during Mughal days to announce the death of a prince or a dear one to the Emperor. The *Vakil* of the deceased would appear before the king with a blue handkerchief tied around his arm.[342] Abul Fazl's death was announced to Akbar in this manner.[343]

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[336] For details refer to Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IV, pp. 501-2 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, pp. 80-82 ; Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 90.

[337] E.R.E., IV, p. 501.

[338] M.A. (Urdu), p. 381.

[339] Herklots' *Islam in India*, p. 90.

[340] Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 80.

Several European travellers have referred to the loud lamentations of our womenfolk which immediately followed a death.[344] Azam Shah is reported to have wept like a baby on seeing his father's (Aurangzeb's) dead body and called him aloud as ordinary people do.[345] Ovington refers to the great skill of Indians in preserving a corpse from decomposition by the repetition of some words and not by embalming like Egyptians.[346] It is, however, certain that the injunction of the Quran regarding the quick burial of the corpse was invariably followed.[347] The body was wrapped in the customary shroud,[348] usually by a *Qazi*[349] after having been given a cold bath by a professional washer, male or female as the case may be.[350] Ghosts were much dreaded and in order to baffle them, it was usual, specially among the royal family, to remove the corpse, through an opening in the wall.[351]

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[341] Also see *Storia*, II, p. 342 ; IV, p. 436. If a great man died, the fact was communicated to the Emperor in the phrase "Such or such a one hath made himself a sacrifice at your Majesty's feet." *A Voyage to East Indies*, reprint of 1777, p. 382.

[342] *Maasir-ul-Umra*, I, trans., Beveridge, p. 123.

[343] *Ibid.*

[344] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 282. Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 432,

[345] Irvine, *The Later Mughals*, Vol. I (ed. Sarkar), p. 7.

[346] Ovington, p. 246.

[347] The Prophet gave the following reason for it that "if he was a good man, the sooner he is buried, the more quickly he will reach heaven, if a bad man he should be speedily buried so that his unhappy lot may not fall upon others in his house." Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 81.

[348] It consists of three pieces of cotton for men, five for women. White colour is only admissible in India. E. R. E., IV, p. 501 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 81.

[349] Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 124.

The Bier

The body, placed on a bed plank with the head to the East and the face towards *Kaba*, was carried to the graveyard by four from the near relatives, every now and then relieved by an equal number.[352] Akbar escorted the body of Maham Anaga for some distance.[353] Hamid-ud-din Khan Bahadur, Governor of Ahmadnagar, carried the body of Aurangzeb on his shoulders to the outside of the Diwan-i-Adalat[354] and then followed the bier on foot, pulling out his hair in grief.[355] A nobleman's bier, covered with flowers and heavily perfumed,[356] was carried with befitting honour and dignity. The deceased's insignia of rank, flags, elephants, cavalry, etc. accompanied it.[357] Relatives and friends following the bier of a male[358] deceased would go on repeating the creed or the benediction.[359]

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[350] Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 431 ; Storia, III, p. 153 ; E.R.E., IV, p. 501.

[351] *Storia*, II, p. 126 ; IV, p. 431. Smith's *Akbar*, p. 327. The corpse was carried out head first in order to baffle the ghost and to prevent its finding its way back. See W. Crookes' *Popular Religion and Folklore*, second edition, ii, p. 56. Also see Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, VI, p. 385.

[352] Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 44.

[353] *Maasir*, I, p. 148 ; Gulbadan Begam, *Humayunnama*, trans. Beveridge, p. 62.

[354] *Maasir*, I. p.613.

[355] *Ibid.* Azam Shah carried the dead body of Aurangzeb on his shoulders up to the main entrance gate. W. Irvine, *The Later Mughals*, (ed. Sarkar), Vol. I, p. 7.

[356] Ovington, p. 245 ; *Storia*, III, p. 153.

[357] *Storia*, III, p. 153.

[358] "A turban bound with gold is laid upon the outside as a token that inside is a body." *Storia*, III, p. 153.

[359] *Storia*, III, p. 153.

But no such prayers were uttered in the case of females who, as Manucci writes, "have no entry into heaven" according to Muhammadan belief.[360] People showed great respect to the dead in deference to the wishes of the Prophet,[361] the passers-by stood up in reverence to the right of a bier and said prayers for the soul of the deceased.[362] The main funeral service took place in the mosque when prayers were recited by an Imam and his attendant high,[363] the bier lying on the ground with the deceased's right side towards Mecca.[364]

Internment Rites

The body was gently lifted out of the bier and placed with its back in the deeply dug grave,[365] its head pointing to the north, and its face kept towards Mecca in the belief that he might arise, as Sir John Marshall writes, on the Day of Judgement "with his face towards that holy place."[366] A little earth was sprinkled, chapter CXII or XX of the Quran recited and the grave was closed up. Then the *fiqi* in the character of *mulaqqin* or tutor would repeat the five correct answers[367] to be given by the deceased to the examining angels on that night (*Lailat al wagha*—night of desolation) and, after saying a *fatiha* for the deceased and also for all the dead in the cemetery twice,[368] all returned home, took a bath and washed their clothes.[369]

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[360] *Ibid.*

[361] E.R.E., IV, p. 501.

[362] *Storia*, III, p. 153.

[363] E.R.E., IV, p. 501 ; *Qanoon-i-Islam*, pp. 96-97.

[364] *Ibid.* ; *Sir John Marshall in India*, p. 404.

[365] Della Valle (ed. 1664), p. 401; *India in the 17th Century*, p. 382. "The grave of a woman should be the height of a man's chest, if for a man to the height of the waist." *Qanoon-i-Islam*, p. 98 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 45. On Kam Baksh's death, Qazi and Muhammad Ghaus, the chief *Mufti* with other religious men were entrusted with the grave. Irvine, *The Later Mughals*, Vol. I (ed. Sarkar), pp. 64-65.

[366] *Sir John Marshall in India*, p. 404.

[367] "When the angels come and ask the dead his catechism, he must reply that God is Allah, His Prophet, Muhammad, his religion, Islam, his Bible, the Quran, and his *qibla* the *Kaba*." Also see Irvine, *The Later Mughals* (ed. Sarkar), Vol. I, pp. 64-65.

Period of Mourning

Mourning was observed for forty days according to Manucci.[370] It was customary with the Mughal kings to present mourning dresses to the heirs on the death of a noble.[371] Dainty dishes and gaudy dresses were avoided during this period.[372] Jahangir refused to change his dress for some days on the death of Qutb-ud-Din Koka's mother whom the emperor regarded as his own mother.[373] Shahjahan, too, gave up the use of coloured garments on the death of Mumtaz Mahal.[374] He would not listen to music and even abandoned the customary feasts.[375] Prince Azam Khan, although he was greatly fond of music and dance, gave up both the entertainments on the death of his beloved wife Jahanzeb Banu Begam.[376] On hearing of Shahjahan's death, Aurangzeb and the Princes Royal and the ladies of the harem put on white clothes.[377] The Hindu custom of getting oneself shaved after the death of a dear one seems to have been followed by Muhammadans also.[378] It was customary for a widow belonging to a high class family to cover her palanquin with green cloth as a sign of mourning for her deceased husband.[379] The relatives would visit the grave on the third, 10th and 19th day after death to perform certain rites.[380] It was usual to read certain chapters from the Quran and recite *fatiha* on these occasions.[381] Badauni particularly refers to the ceremonies on the third day or *Ziarat* when *sharbat*, betel leaves, and food were distributed.[382] The mourning ended on the 40th day when the relatives visited the grave and distributed food, clothes, and money to the poor and the needy in the name of the deceased.[383]

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[368] E.R.E., IV, p. 502.

[369] *Storia*, III, p. 153.

[370] *Ibid.*, Also see Gulbadan Begam, *Humayunnama*, trans., p. 62 ; *Qanoon-i-Islam*, p. 105.

[371] *Maasir*, I, pp. 255, 563, 723.

[372] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 282.

[373] *Tuzuk* (R & B), I, p. 85,

[374] *Maasir*, I, p. 295.

[375] *Ibid.*, p. 246.

[376] Daughter of Dara Shukoh. Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, p. 81. Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah stopped drum beating for three days to show respect to the memory of his kinsman. *Hadiqatul-Alam*, II, p. 123 quoted in Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah, I, p. 140.

[377] Latif, *Agra, Historical and Descriptive*, p. 40.

Anniversaries of Death

The anniversary of the death was observed in a befitting manner.[384] Jahangir also refers to this custom which the Muhammadans borrowed from the Hindus.[385] Food was prepared according to the survivors' means and distributed among the poor after reciting *fatiha*.[386] It is interesting to recall how one Naith recipient disliked the food distributed in memory of Nawab Shahid and remarked that had the Nawab been alive he would not have relished it.[387] The rich would illuminate the tombs of their ancestors,[388] while the common people set lamps at the former or at the house of the deceased.[389] It was customary to hold assemblies of respectable and learned men on these occasions.[390] The tombs of the saints built through the generosity of the rich[391] were places of reverence, where *maulvis* were employed by philanthropists to recite the Quran by the side of the grave.[392] Devotees, especially women, visited these tombs frequently[393] and soon they became notorious as centres of immorality.[394] Aurangzeb, like Firoze Tughlaq[395] a little earlier, was opposed to the visit of women to the cemeteries.[396] The orthodox emperor did not even like roofs being set up over structures containing tombs and the whitewashing of sepulchres.[397]

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[378] On the death of Jiji Anaga, Akbar, besides her sons and in fact the whole tribe, got their heads and moustaches shaved. *Maasir*, I, p. 327. Sometimes a widow would also get her head shaved. *Maasir*, I, p. 812.

[379] *Storia*, III, p. 253.

[380] *Qanoon-i-Islam*, p. 107.

[331] *Ibid.*

[382] Badauni, I, p. 248.

[383] *Storia*, III, p. 153. Akbar attended the *chihlum* of his story-teller Darbar Khan. Hodivala's *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, p. 580. Two lakh rupees were spent in furnishing the corpse, distributing alms and despatching coffin to Delhi on the death of Jahanzeb Banu Begam. Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, p. 81.

[384] Della Valle (1664 edition), p, 432 ; Ovington, p. 245 ; *India in the 17th Century*, p. 282.

[385] *Tuzuk* (R & B), I, p. 247.

[386] *Storia*, III, p. 153 ; Ovington, p. 245.

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[387] *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi* by Burhan Ibn Hasan, English translation by S. Muhmmad Husayn Nainar.

[388] Ovington, p. 245.

[389] Petermundy, II, p. 229.

[390] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, R & B., I, pp. 148, 247, 249.

[391] Della Valle (1664 edition), p. 432.

[392] *Ibid.*

[393] *Ibid.*

[394] Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, III, p. 101.

[395] E. & D., III, p. 380.

[396] Sarkar, *Aurangzib*, III, p. 101.

[397] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 2

Social Etiquettes and Manners

General

Social calls have never been in vogue in Indian society.[1] Our individualistic outlook, which is primarily due to the prevalence of the caste system, is responsible for it. Our women's inability, on account of restrictions imposed by society, to attend to male guests or to talk familiarly with them, might have been another factor. Men met often, however, in the past as they do daily even to this day, on the *chaupals* in the villages but women had little opportunity or even leisure to pay a visit to their female friends or relatives. Men in urban areas met only briefly to talk business and women found still fewer opportunities to visit one another owing not a little to the observance of the *pardah* during Muslim rule in India. However, various occasions like births, marriages, funerals, etc. or even sickness provided an opportunity to both sexes to meet their friends and relatives.

Formalities for receiving a guest

Visitors were received with many formalities during Mughal days. Whenever a visitor arrived, it was customary for the master of the house to receive him at the gate.[3] The shoes were usually put off at the entrance.[4] If he happened to be an elderly or spiritual person, it was usual in a Hindu home to wash his feet with water mixed with sandal paste, flowers, betel and rice.[5] If there was no previous intimation, the housekeeper would rise up from his seat to welcome him.[6] He was then taken to the drawing room which, in case of a rich family, was spread over with beautiful and costly carpets having cushions of velvet to "bolster their backs and sides."[7] A mat and a cot served the same purpose in an ordinary home.[8] Chairs were thought to be uncomfortable and were rarely used.[9] Even the Governor of Surat had no chairs and one was brought specially for Roe on his insistence.[10] A person who let his legs or feet be seen while sitting was considered to be devoid of manners.[11] Nobles and governors would usually receive their visitors in their daily darbar held in the *Diwan Khana* richly decorated with handsome rugs and costly tapestry.[12] The visitors took their seats on his either side according to their rank or dignity after the usual *salams*.[13] Strangers were allowed to visit by permission and left after their business was over.[14] Intimate friends might stay on till the noble retired to the *zenana*.[15]

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[1] See *The Mirza Namah* of Mirza Kamran, English translation by M. Hidayat Husain, J.R.A.S.B., New Series, Vol. IX, 1913, p. 5.

[2] Macauliffe, I, p. 65 ; Y. H. Khan, *Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah*, I, pp. 9, 144 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 723.

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[3] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280 ; Fryer (old), p. 95.

[4] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280 ; Storia, III, p. 39 ; Tavernier, II, p. 233.

[5] *Ain*, III, p. 381. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 172 ; *Storia*, III, p. 38. Jhanda, a carpenter of Bisiar (in old Bushahir State) received Guru Nanak in his house, washed his feet and drank the water used for this purpose. Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 93.

[6] *Maasir*, I, p. 127 ; M. Jani Beg, the ruler of Sind, was greatly displeased when Abul Fazl did not rise up to receive him (*Maasir*, I, p. 127). Khan Jahan Lodhi used to rise up in honour of Fazil, Dewan of Deccan, but would not do so for Asad who used to say : "He rises for a Moghul and does not rise for me who am a Saiyid." (*Maasir*, I, p. 270)

[7] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280.

[8] Mandelslo, p. 27 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 61.

[9] Tavernier, II, p. 233.

[10] *Roe's Embassy*, p. 65,

[11] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280. Tavernier saw Mir Jumla sitting on a carpet and wrote that "Peoples sit in this country as in Turkey and as our tailors do." Tavernier, II, p. 233. Various paintings of the period depicting darbar scenes corroborate the above version. Even see "A drinking party" (Plate 88, Vol. III, Chester

Visit to King difficult and expensive

A visit to the king was both difficult and expensive. High and influential nobles had to be approached and even bribed before the royal permission could be had.[16] Sir William Norris, who came to India as the British King's Ambassador to the great Mughal, rightly formed the opinion that many 'generous and great men' besides the Mughal would have to be 'gratified', and as the presents sent from London were much too few, so he asked his men to make local purchases.[17] The ceremonies to be observed at the court, too, required a good

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Beatty). Akbar is also seen sitting in the same posture with his legs underneath in the presence of Baba Bilas. (Plate 89, Vol. I, Chester Beatty).

[12] *Jahangir's India*, pp, 67-68 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; Mandelslo, p. 64 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 426.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] Mandelslo, p. 64.

[15] *Jahangir's India*, p. 68.

[16] Tavernier had to offer presents worth about £. 1,739 to the grandees including Shaista Khan, Jaffar Khan, chief treasurer, the stewards, the captains of the palace gates, etc. Tavernier, I, pp. 115, 114, 106, (ed. 1925). Also refer to Sir William Norris at Masulipatam, J.I.H., Vol. VI, 1927, p. 59. The Consul at Surat told Sir William Norris that not to speak of the nobles and others even the King himself "values nothing so much as a good sum of money paid into his treasury." J.I.H., Vol. VI, 1927, p. 59.

[17] Sir William Norris at Masulipatam, J.I.H., Vol. V, p. 211, 1926, and Vol. VI, 1927, p. 59.

deal of training. Sir Thomas Roe,[18] Bernier[19] and Manucci[20] have referred to the formalities an ambassador had to observe while paying a visit to the Indian sovereign.

Reception of an Ambassador and King

A noble was especially despatched to receive the ambassador at an earlier stage of his journey and present him with *khilat* on behalf of the King. The ambassador was expected to present his credentials to the King clad in this robe of honour. Persian ambassadors were shown special courtesy while others were allotted an inconspicious place in the darbar.[21] A few ambassadors had the good fortune to be received by the King in the private audience.

A foreign ruler was received with due ceremonies. Raja Bhagwan Das was sent by Akbar to receive Mirza Sulaiman, the ruler of Badakshan at the Nilab river.[22] M. Jani Beg, the ruler of Sind, was received by Abul Fazl at the gate.[23] Khusrau Sultan, son of Nadhr Khan, ruler of Balkh and Badakshan was received by Ali Mardhan Khan at the edge of his carpet.[24]

Offering of Nazarana obligatory

When paying a visit to a great man—the King, a prince, a governor or even a noble—it was the usual custom to offer him some presents.[25] It was considered highly discourteous for an inferior dignitary to call upon a superior dignitary empty-handed.[26] The presents meant for the nobles were of not much value but those offered to the king included rare things and cost heavily.[27] Tavernier's presents to Aurangzeb, for instance, included "a battle-mace of rock crystal, all the sides of which were covered with rubies and emeralds inlaid in gold in the crystal."[28] These presents were looked upon as *nazrana* or an homage to the lord[29] who would usually select some articles and return the rest.[30] It was considered unmannerly to refuse a present without some specific reason.[31] Mandelslo quotes it as an eye-opener for the Europeans who thought Indians to be uncivilized. The traveller adds that there is "more civility to be found among the Indians than there is among those who pretend to the sole possession of it but seldom accompanying it with the sincerity which even attends it in the Indies."[32] Thevenot rightly ridicules the ignorance of the envoys of the French East India Company who refused to accept Rs. 30/- offered to them as a present by the *banias*. Unaware of the Indian custom, the envoys thought they were being treated as beggars and got annoyed. Thevenot, well aware of the Indian custom, explains in detail the proper and civilized manner of responding to such a present. Either the envoys, he writes, should have accepted the money and made some presents instead, or given the money back after receiving it or should have just touched and then returned it.[33]

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[18] Roe was refused a chair in the court on the plea that "no man ever sat in that place" but he was allowed as a privilege to recline against a pillar. *Roe's Embassy*, pp. 92-93.

[19] Bernier (ed. Constable), pp. 117-18.

[20] *Storia*, I, pp. 87-89.

[21] Bernier, pp. 119-20 ; I.N., I, 336-37 ; M.A. (Persian), 37 ; *Roe's Embassy*, pp. 295-97. Also see Sir Norris at Masulipatam, J.I.H., Vol. VI, p. 65.

[22] T.A., II (trans), p. 475.

[23] *Maasir*, I, p. 127.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 822.

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[25] Hamilton, I, p 119 ; Fryer (old), pp. 80-81 ; Tavernier, I, p. 115 ; Thevenot, p. 100 ; Mandelslo, p. 33 ; *Storia,* II, pp. 344, 52. Manucci writes that this habit was borrowed by the Indian kings from Persia. *Storia,* II, p. 52. T.A., II, pp. 263, 302, 325, 346-47. Also see Extract from the "Letter Book of Thomas Pitt" (1699-1709), J.I.H., Vol. XX, pt. III, p. 315.

[26] Hamilton, I, p. 119. Geleynssen rightly observes : "Here (India) as in most parts of the world, the great men are eager for presents, firstly for the respect and recognition they imply (for they stand very strictly on their reputation) and secondly, for the gratification because most of them are exceedingly covetous and avaricious. Geleynssen's Report, trans., J.I.H. Vol. III, Pts. III and IV, p. 80. Also Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign,* pp. 110-11.

[27] Tavernier, I, p. 114.

[28] *Ibid.* For Sir William Norris' presents to Nawab of Masulipatam refer to J.I.H., Vol. V, p. 219.

[29] Thevenot, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[30] Despatches of Dutch Ambassador Ketelaar, J.P.H.S., Vol. I, p. 15.

[31] *Ibid.* Also see extract from the "Letter Book of Thomas Pitt" (1699-1709) by Dr. A. G. Pawar, in J.I.H., Vol. XX, Pt. 3, December 1941, p. 319.

[32] Mandelslo, p. 33.

King's visits

Mughal kings rarely paid visits to their nobles. Even these rare visits were usually confined to those families which were in matrimonial alliance with the royal house.[34] It was the highest honour which a noble could ever dream of. Huge presents had to be offered to the king as *nazrana*.[35] Sometimes, however, the king would call on an ailing *umra* of a very high rank to inquire about his health.[36]. Hawkins describes in detail the ceremonies to be observed by a nobleman while paying his respects to the Emperor after two or three years' continuous absence from the capital.[37]

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[33] Thevenot, Chap. XXXVIII *op. cit.*, p. 100. Manrique mentions how Tulsidas, a trader of Multan, received his gift. After kissing it a number of times, he touched it with his head thrice. Manrique, II, p. 224.

[34] Shahjahan honoured Afzal Khan with a visit. *Massir*, I, p. 152.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] Akbar visited Abul Fath, the Sadr, during the latter's illness. *Maasir*, I, p. 108. Aurangzeb called on Jaffar Khan to enquire about his health. *Maasir*, I, p. 723. Also see Y. H. Khan, *Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah*, I, p. 9. Khan Khanan went to the house of Maulana Pir Muhammad, his Vakil-i-Mutlaq, when the latter was ill. T. A., II, p. 230.

[37] *Hawkins' Voyages* (Hak. Soc.), p. 441. Also see Bernier, p. 266.

Politeness of Indians

The Indian manner of conversation has elicited much praise from the travellers[38] who describe them as "past masters of good manners".[39] Polite and modest in their conversation, they were at the same time very civil and reserved.[40] Even friends gossiped in a dignified manner.[41] While talking to their elders or superiors, they were very careful and would not let their head be uncovered[12] as this was considered to be a sign of disrespect. They applauded the elders' performances and dared not contradict or even question the authenticity of their statements.[43] They would not usually take their seats in their presence as it was taken to be a gesture of disrespect to the elderly fellow. Religious teachers, Brahmans[44] and the Qazis were specially cared for and respected. Akbar stood up to receive the saint, Dadu.[45] Aurangzeb was annoyed to learn that Ibrahim Khan, the Governor of Bengal, sat on a couch in the darbar while the Qazis and other jurists took their seats on the floor.[46] Babar, who calls the Pathans rustic and tactless, goes on to quote an instance: "Biban waited on me, this person sat although Dilawar Khan, his superior in rank, the son of Alam Khan who are of royal birth, did not."[47]

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[38] *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; Mandelslo, p. 64 ; Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 427-29 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; Ovington, pp. 232, 313.

[39] De Laet, p. 91.

[40] Mandelslo, p. 64 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; Ovington, p. 231. Also see *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 8 ; *The Mirza Namah*, English Translation, M. Hidayat Husain, A.S.B. New Series, Vol. IX, 1913, p. 4.

[41] Orme's *Fragments*, p. 426.

[42] *Storia*, III, p. 39. *Sannaysis* and Brahmans were an exception.

[43] Orme's *Fragments*, p. 426.

[44] Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 222 ; Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 432, 434.

[45] W. G. Orr, *A Sixeenth Century Indian Mystic : Dadu and His Followers*. p. 35. Also see T. A., II, p. 468.

[46] Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 118.

[47] B. N. (Beveridge), p. 466.

Respect shown to elders

Everyone greeted his elders with the utmost respect. Akbar had just gone to bed when his aunt Nigar Khanum arrived. Half asleep, he at once got up and saluted her.[48] Careri relates how sixty-five years old Shah Alam alighted from his horse at the sight of his father Aurangzeb and paid his respects.[49] On receiving a letter from Jahangir, Khurram even when in rebellion, kissed and lifted it to his eyes and head and while reading he bowed down at every word.[50] At an interview the prince, according to etiquette, would walk round the Emperor twice and present *nazar* and *nisar* to him.[51] Raja Ram Singh, as a token of respect, touched the feet of the older Shaista Khan who embraced the Raja and kissed his head. The sons of the Nawab in turn touched the feet of the Raja and accompanied him for a considerable distance.[52] How a Mughal king bade good-bye to his son going out on an expedition or welcomed him on his victorious return are very well illustrated in various paintings of the period.[53] While the king embraces his son out of paternal affection, the latter bows his head with all respect.[54]

Court Etiquette

Elaborate rules had been laid down regarding appearance, salutation and conduct in the darbar.[55] Every noble at the court was obliged to attend the darbar twice daily.[56] As a general rule, barring a few specially privileged notables[57] or princes of the royal blood,[58] none could dare to sit in the court. The highest dignitaries of the state, ambassadors from foreign lands and even dethroned princes seeking military or financial aid, were no exception to it. When the Ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, demanded a chair he was frankly told that "none has ever sat in this place."[59] The princes stood within a few yards of the royal throne. Next came the most favoured grades who stood within an enclosure of silver railings. The red-painted wooden railing enclosure was meant for the lesser *mansibdars*.[60] No one was permitted to leave the darbar, till the king had retired. The king was addressed as *Hazrat Salamat*, *Qiblah-Din-wa-Dunia*, *Qiblah-i-Din-i-Jahan*, *Alam Panah*, etc.[61] Aurangzeb was called *Pir-i-Dastgir*.[62] The king would reply in a dignified and majestic tone.[63] Linschoten's observation that the king would talk to an ambassador even though he could understand his language only through an interpreter is based on hearsay.[64]. Serious notice was taken of any misconduct. Lashkar Khan, the Mir Bakshi, once appeared in the Court drunk and misbehaved. He was ordered to be taken round the city tied to a horse's tail and later sent to jail.[65]

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[48] A.N., I, p. 90 ; Tr., I, p. 231. Also see Badauni, II, p. 64 ; Tr. II, p. 63.

[49] Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 219.

[50] Padshah Buranjis, *Islamic Culture*, January 1934, p. 71.

[51] Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, p. 74.

[52] *Islamic Culture*, April 1934, p. 91.

[53] Plate II, Indian Drawings, 'Shahjahan leaving for an expedition to Balkh in 1647 A.D.' and 'Jahangir receiving Prince Khurram on his return from Deccan' (Plate XXIII, Catalogue of Indian Collections, Part VI, Mughal Paintings).

[54] *Ibid.* For a painting depicting Jahangir welcoming Shahjahan, refer to Percy Brown, *Indian Paintings Under the Mughals*, Plate LVIII, p. 150.

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[55] *Ain*, I, (1939) pp. 168-69.

[56] Tavernier, I, pp. 114-15 ; Sir William Norris at Masulipatam, J. I. H., Vol. VI 1927, p. 59.

[57] Abdur Rahim was allowed to sit in the darbar by Jahangir and a little later by Shahjahan. For details see *Tuzuk*, p. 416 ; *Badshahnama*, I, i, p. 194 quoted in *Thrones, Chairs and Seats used by the Indian Mughals* by Abdul Aziz, p. 182 ; Ovington, p. 194.

[58] This honour was conferred on Prince Khurram after his return from a victorious campaign in the Deccan. *Tuzuk*, p. 195 ; R & B., I, 395. Dara Shukoh was allowed to sit in the darbar on the Nauroz festival in 1060 A. H. *Badshahnama*, III, p. 108a, vide Abdul Aziz, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

[59] *Roe's Embassy*, Foster, 1926, p. 71.

[60] *Early Travels*, p. 115 ; Manrique (Hak. Soc.), pp. 192-98 ; Petermundy, II (Hak. Soc.), p. 200 ; *Roe's Embassy*, p. 93 ; A.N., I, p. 358 ; M.A., pp. 88, 128.

[61] *Storia*, II, p. 346.

[62] *Ibid.*

[63] *Storia*, II, p. 401.

Behaviour in assembly

The decorum maintained in an assembly was exemplary.[66] They made no gestures and were never loud in their discourses.[67] There was a certain gravity in their mode of speaking.[68] If there happened to be something confidential to be conveyed to the other person, they would hold a handkerchief or scarf in front of their mouths to avoid the other's breath.[69] None of them would stir from their seats[70] or do anything which might be against the recognized etiquette.[71] Ovington, after admiring the Hindu merchants for their innocence, humility and patience, writes : "The Orientals are generally much more tender and insinuating in their language and more prompt and easy in their deportment than those bred in Europe."[72]

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[64] Linschoten, II, p. 67. Monserrate (p. 204) praises the courtesy and kindness shown by Akbar towards foreigners and ambassadors.

[65] A.N., II, p. 364 ; Tr., II, p. 529.

[66] Referring to the assemblies usually held in the Diwan Khana of a noble, Pelsaert writes : "It is more like a school of wise and virtuous philosophers than a gathering of false infidels" Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67. Also refer to Orme's *Fragments*, 431.

[67] Orme's *Fragments*, p. 426. Mandelslo, p, 64 ; Ovington, pp. 275, 313. This was considered one of the main tenets of Mirza. *The Mirzanamah*, English trans. in J,A.S.B., N.S. Vol. IX, p. 4.

[68] Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67. See Plate 79 (b), Vol. III, of the Library of A. Chester Beatty for "A Saint conversing with a young noble."

[69] Linschoten, II, p. 56 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; Mandelslo, p. 64.

[70] *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.

[71] Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 428, 432 ; Ovington, p. 275.

[72] Ovington, p. 275. "Banias are most innocent and obsequious, humble and patience to a miracle........" *Ibid.*

Orme's praise of the dignified manner in which the courtiers of the Nawab behaved in face of the indecent jokes cut by the Europeans regarding their manners etc. may well serve as an example.[73] They would, no doubt, make loud noise when quarrelling but rarely did they come to blows.[74]

Offer of a betel significant

The visitors were usually entertained with betels[75] which were brought in wooden trays.[76] The offering of a betel also indicated that the visitors might now leave.[77] When offered by a king, it meant great honour and had to be eaten in his presence.[78] The greatest honour, however, consisted in partaking of the half-chewed betel of the Emperor. The king would sometimes bestow a *jagir*, *khilat*, or other gifts on the visitor.[79]

Greetings and Salutations

Hindus and Muhammadans differ in their mode of greeting friends, relatives or superiors. The handshake,[80] the present mode of salutation common among the educated classes of both communities, was never in vogue during the ancient[81] and medieval periods. Its general adoption is primarily due to our contact with the West during the last two centuries.

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[73] Orme's *Fragments*, p. 427.

[74] Thevenot, Chap. xxxviii, p. 72 ; Ovington, p. 275.

[75] Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 205 ; Mandelslo, p. 33 ; *Storia*, I, p. 63 ; Pieter Van Den Brocke at Surat (1620-29), translation in J.I.H., Vol. XI. It is offered as a glass of wine among Europeans. Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 237. Mir Jumla entertained Tavernier and his party with betels. Tavernier, I, p. 239 ; Y. H. Khan, *Nizamul-Mulk Asaf Jah*, I, p. 144 ; *History of East Indies*, p. 364.

[76] Linschoten, II, p. 64 ; Grose, *op. cit.*, I, p. 237.

[77] Petermundy, II, p. 97 ; *Storia*, I, p. 63 ; Linschoten, II, p. 68 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 205 ; *Travels of Pedro Teixeira*, p. 200. According to the latter traveller it was served twice on the arrival of a guest and at the time of his departure.

[78] Bernier, p. 13 ; Linschoten, II, p. 68 ; M.A. (Talab), p. 199 refers to the offering of three *biras* of *pan* by Aurangzeb to Sikandar Adil. Also see T.A., II (trans.), p. 371 ; *Travels of Pedro Teixeira*, p. 200. Pieter Van Den Brocke at Surat (trans.), W.H. Moreland, J.I.H. Vol. XI, 1932, p. 4,

[79] T.A., p. 263 ; *India in the 15th Century*, p. 31.

Manucci describes five kinds of salutation prevalent among the Hindus in Mughal days.[82] 'Ram, Ram',[83] the most popular form of greeting among equals, has been referred to by many travellers.[84] Quite frequently the palms of the hands would be folded[85] and raised up to the stomach as a mark of respect to an elderly friend. An embrace might also follow specially when they had not met for a long time.[86] A person of higher status, a governor, minister or a general, was greeted by raising the folded hands above the head.[87] Greater respect was paid to an elder, father, mother or a spiritual teacher. The younger would greet an elder by bowing down, touching his or her feet and raising the hand to his head.[88] He would even prostrate himself before his teacher.[89] The king was also greeted in the same manner by all classes[90] except the Brahmans who would only raise their folded hands.[91] Brahmans, as a class, were held in high esteem and none would dare to pass by without bowing his head in reverence.[92] The superior would greet the inferior by displaying the palm of the right hand raised high.[93] Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh religion, is said to have advised his followers to return the salutation with the words 'Sat Kartar' (the True Creator).[94]

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[80] Alberuni refers to it when he writes : "In shaking hands they grasp the hand of a man from the convex side"—Alberuni (Sachau), Vol. II, p. 182. Nizam-ud-din refers to it in Mughal times. Bairam Khan was killed by a Nuhani Afghan when the former was shaking hands with the latter.

[81] For various modes of 'Hindu Salutations' refer to Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, Vol. VI, (1930-32), pp. 359-83.

[82] *Storia*, III, pp. 37-38.

[83] Name of a Hindu *avatar*, Lord Rama, the hero of the Ramayana. P. Thomas, *Hindu Religion, Customs and Manners*, p. 80.

[84] *First Englishmen in India*, p. 105 ; Thevenot, Chapt. XXXVII, p. 65 ; Herbert's *Travels* p. 45.

[85] *Namaste* meaning 'greeting to you' is the modern epithet for the same, 'The Maratha Poet-Saint Dasopant Digamber' by Justice E. Abbot, Journal American Oriental Society, Vol. 42, pp. 268 and 278. There is a reference to *Sashtanga Namaskara*, *Ibid.*, p. 278. See Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 80 ; Dubois, *Hindu Manners and Customs*, Vol. I, pp. 329-30 ; Baboo Ishuree Dass, *Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindoos of Northern India*, p. 131.

[86] *Storia*, III, p. 38 ; *Early Travels*, p. 19 ; De Laet, p. 81.

[87] *Storia*, III, p. 38 ; Thevenot, Chap. XXXVII, p. 65.

Muhammadan salutations

Salam[95] was the usual salutation among all classes of

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[88] Ovington, pp. 183-84 ; De Laet, p. 81. For Dasopant Digamber, the Maratha Poet prostrating before his mother refer to Journal American Oriental Society, Vol. 42, p. 268. Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 80 ; Ishuree Dass, *Domestic Manners and Customs of the Hindoos*, pp. 130-31.

[89] *Storia*, III, p. 38 ; Bartolomeo, p. 161 ; *Bhakta Lilamrita*, J.R.A S. Bombay Branch, Vol. III, p. 127. For a disciple prostrating before his Guru see Plate XII, Indian Drawings by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.

[90] *Storia*, III, p. 38.

[91] *Ibid.* Bulletin of School of Oriental and African Studies, Vol. XII (1948), p. 627. Ramesvar Bhatt of Wagholi, we are told in *Bhakta Lilamrita*, felt his whole body burning due to a curse from a Muslim fakir. He was advised to ask for the fakir's forgiveness. His reply, however, was "How can I a Brahman fall at a Musalman's feet ?" J.R.A.S. Bombay Branch Vol. III, p. 22.

[92] *Storia*, III, p. 38 ; Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 222 ; Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 432-34 ; Bartolomeo, p. 160. Brahmans would then bless him. For an earlier reference see Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Vol. XII, p. 627, 'Gardizi on India'.

[93] *Storia*, III, p. 38.

[94] Macauliffe, *Sikh Religion*, Vol. I, p. 49.

[95] T.A., II, p. 193 (Trans.).

Muhammadans who are religiously bound to greet each other with the words *'al-Salam alekum'*,[96] the other responding *'Wa-lekum-al-Salam'*.[97] Strangely, the travellers fail to refer to the use of the latter form of greeting by Indian Muhammadans during Mughal days. Nizamuddin, however, refers to its use while relating the incident of Shaikh Ali who had adopted the practices of Mahdism. The latter did not observe *taslim* while paying a visit to King Salim Khan. Shaikh Ali only made the salutation permitted by the *shara* to which Salim Khan indignantly replied *'alek-us-Salam'*.[98] Aurangzeb, however, made it obligatory in April 1670.[99] Friends would greet each other by raising the right hand to the forehead,[100] and would even embrace[101] or grasp each other's hands in token of love.[102] A little inclination of the head or body also served the same purpose.[103] When greeting a superior, the performance of both the above-mentioned modes together was necessary.[104]

High personages were greeted by raising the right hand to the forehead and bending the body forward.[105] It was customary for a person of lower status to get down from his horse at the sight of a superior one and let him pass first.[106] The latter acknowledged the greeting of the inferior person with an inclination of the head.[107] The nobles would dismount at the sight of the royal ladies and greet them with a bow. Having received a betel leaf, they again bowed and withdrew.[108]

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[96] Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 138 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 563 ; Crooke's *Islam in India*, p. 186. It means 'The peace be on you.'

[97] 'And on you be also the peace'.

[98] T.A., II, p. 192 (trans.). Also see Macauliffe, I, pp. 52-53.

[99] Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 138.

[100] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 181 ; Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 247 ; Ovington, pp. 183-84 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; De Laet, p. 91. This custom of lifting the hand to head or any motion of the body while giving salutation is not in accordance with the tradition. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 563.

[101] Mandelslo, p. 64.

[102] Da Laet, p. 81.

[103] Mandelslo, p. 64 ; De Laet, p. 91 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.

[104] Ovington, pp. 183-84 ; De Laet. p. 91 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; *Storia*, III, p. 37.

[105] *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.

[106] Ovington, p. 195.

Kurnish and *Taslim*

Kurnish and *taslim* have been mentioned by Abul Fazl as the recognized modes of salutation to the king.[109] *Kurnish*[110] consisted in placing the palm of the right hand on the forehead and bending down the head.[111] While offering *taslim*,[112] the person placed the back of his right hand on the ground, raised it slowly till he stood erect when he put the palm of his hand on the top of his head.[113] After raising the hand from the ground, it was usual, as Ovington remarks, to place it on the breast before taking it to the forehead.[114] Della Valle corroborates it.[115] It was the usual custom, as Babar relates, to kneel thrice before the king[116] upon taking leave, or upon presentation, or upon receiving a *mansab*, a *jagir*, or a dress of honour or an elephant or a horse but only once on all other occasions.[117] Akbar issued orders that the taslim should be repeated thrice.[118] He, however, exempted Sh. Gadai Kamlu and Mirza Sulaiman,[119] ruler of Badakshan, from this customary salutation. These modes of salutations were strictly reserved for the king during Akbar's reign.[120] *Taslim*, however, became a common mode of greeting among nobles during the succeeding reigns but Aurangzeb forbade it in April 1670 and substituted instead '*Salam-alekum*'.[121]

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[107] Tavernier, I, p. 234.

[108] *Storia*, II, p. 354.

[109] Whenever a picture of the king was brought, the noble would leave his seat and bow down in all reverence. Padshah-Buranjis, trans. in *Islamic Culture*, April, 1934, p. 434.

[110] As to its beginning Akbar is said to have related to Abul Fazl as follows : "One day my royal father bestowed upon me one of his own caps which I put on. Because the cap of the king was rather large, I had to hold it with my (right) hand whilst bending my head downwards and thus performed the manner of salutation (*kurnish*) above described. The king was pleased with the new method and from his feeling of propriety, ordered this to be the mode of *kurnish* and *taslim*." *Ain*, I, p. 167.

[111] *Ain*, I, p. 166. According to Abul Fazl the salutor thus places himself at the complete disposal of the king. He writes : "His Majesty's sons and grand-children, the grandees of the court and all other men who have admittance attend to make the *kurnish*." *Ain*, I, p. 166.

[112] Lit. the act of giving the prayer of peace. (Hughes' *Dictionary*, p. 563). It is also the benediction at the close of the usual form of prayer (Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 628). Also see Bernier, p. 214 ; *Darbar-i-Akbari*, p. 132. Akbar is said to have originated this mode of salutation. In other Muhammadan countries the mode of salutation consisted in folding the arms over the breast and then bending the head. *Ain*, I, p. 158 ; Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 138.

Sijdah

Akbar, the founder of *Din-i-Ilahi*, introduced another salution called *Sijdah*,[122] perhaps at the insistence of his friends, admirers and disciples.[123] As it consisted in bowing down the forehead to the earth, it was looked upon as men-worship by the orthodox.[124] Akbar thought it wise to forbid this practice in *Darbar-i-Am* but allowed it in private assemblies.[125] This custom appears to have been continued during the reign of Jahangir when the subjects prostrated themselves before the king in grateful return for any royal favours conferred on them and also on receipt of royal mandates.[126]

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[113] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 167. It signified, according to Abul Fazl, that the person is ready to give himself as an offering. Della Valle also refers to it. Della Valle, I, p. 38 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 585.

[114] Ovington, pp. 183-84.

[115] Della Valle, I, p. 38.

[116] B.N., p. 641.

[117] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 167. *Maasir*, I, p. 586. Bernier relates how every noble on guard used to perform *taslim* thrice on receiving the meals supplied by the royal kitchen. Bernier, p. 258 ; Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

[118] Ovington, pp. 183-84.

[119] T.A., II, p. 477 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 570.

[120] Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 137.

[121] M.A., pp. 98, 272, quoted in *Ibid.*

[122] Lit. 'prostration'. "As a religious observation the prostration is on seven members, on the forehead, the two hands, the two knees and the toes of both feet. Women must touch the ground with the elbows, men on the contrary must

Kissing the ground

It was, however, found to be objectionable and Shahjahan introduced instead *Zaminbos* or the practice of kissing the ground which was also abandoned after some time and the usual mode of salutation by bowing and touching the head was restored with the addition that it was to be observed not less than four times.[127] Bernier describes how this custom was observed by all the ambassadors when attending the Mughal[128]

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keep the elbows up." Badauni, I (trans.), p. 612, f.n. 3. '*Sajdatus-Sahw*', the prostration of forgetfulness, and '*Sajdat-s-Sahw*', a prostration of thankfulness, are its two other types. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 556.

[123] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 167, f.n. 1. It was invented by Nizam of Badakshan. *Ibid.*, p. 487 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 585.

[124] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 167. Aziz Koka hated this custom and was reluctant to attend the court. *Maasir*, I, p. 325. Also see Chester Beatty, Vol. II, Plate 26 f. 157b, "Akbar receiving homages of nobles of Gujarat. One of the nobles prostrates before him.

[125] *Ibid* ; *Maasir*, I, p. 586.

[126] *Lubb-ut-Tawarikh* of Rai Bhara Mal. E & D, VII, p. 170. Darbar-i-Akbari, p. 133. It was observed at the court of Siraj-ud-daulah even in 1757. Refer to J.R.A.S. Bombay Branch, Vol. XXIV, p. 324. Anquetil Du Perron of Paris, India as seen by him (1755-60) by Shams-ul-Ulma Jivanji Jamshedji Modi.

[127] *Ibid*. *Maasir*, I, p. 586, says that *taslim* was ordered to be observed four times. Rai Bhara Mal of *Lubb-ut-Tawarikh-i-Hind* says this act was ordered to be performed three several times. E & D, Vol. VII, p. 170.

[128] Bernier, pp. 117, 204.

court but the Persian ambassador would not do so in spite of all the machinations of Shahjahan.[129] Aurangzeb completely did away with these so-called pretentions to idolatory and ordered that the usual mode of salutation, '*as-Salam-alekum*' be observed.[130]

Defection, if any, was immediately detected and the offender was suitably punished. Aurangzeb was highly displeased when Zulfiqar Khan's knees touched the royal throne while he was bowing to kiss the Emperor's toe. The Khan was ordered to attend the court for three days with spectacles on as "he had forgotten the court etiquette due to long absence,"[131]

The custom of performing *taslim* thrice continued without any change during the reigns of the later Mughals as is clearly borne out by the despatches of Johan Ketelaar, the Dutch Ambassador to Shah Alam.[132] Whenever the ambassador received a present from the king, he would "turn his brow towards the Emperor's tent in the Moorish fashion and perform three salams.[133]

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[129] *Bernier*, p 152.

[130] M.A. (urdu), p. 98.

[131] Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 75.

[132] Despatches of Johan Josua Ketelaar, Ambassador of Dutch East India Company, translated into English in Journal of the Punjab Historical Society, Vol. X, pp 14, 16.

[133] *Ibid*., p. 18.

CHAPTER 3

Charity and Fasts

SECTION I

CHARITY

A virtue of both communities

Charity[1] has been enjoined upon their followers by the religious scriptures of both the communities.[2] Manu[3] and Muhammad[4] lay down definite rules to be followed for acquiring this religious merit. The grant of precious metals, specially gold and silver, estates, buildings, taxes derived from villages and cows is considered highly meritorious among Hindus.[5] *Zakat*, the annual legal alms[6] of five things, viz., money, cattle, grain, fruit and merchandise, is obligatory on every Muhammadan.[7] The building of temples[8] and mosques[9] had its own merit among Hindus and Muhammadans respectively.

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[1] It implies alms giving as well as kindness and affection. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 50.

[2] Hindus and Muhammadans.

[3] E.R.E. *op. cit.*, III, p. 388. A chapter of *Skanda Purana* and the second part of *Hemadri* deal with the rules for alms-giving. Abul Fazl enumerates 16 kinds of *dana* or alms, viz., *Tula-dana*, *Hiranyagarbha-dana*, *Brahmanda-dana*, *Kalpa-taru-dana*, *Go-Sahasra-dana*, *Hiranya-Kamadhenu-dana*, *Hiranyasva-dana*, *Hiranyasva-ratha-dana*, *Hemahashti-ratha-dana*, *Pancha-langala-dana*, *Dhara-dana*, *Visva-chakra-dana*, *Kalpalata-dana*, *Sapta-sagara-dana*. *Ratna-dhenu-dana*, *Mahabuta-ghata-dana*. For details refer to *Ain*, III (Sarkar), pp. 305-7 and E.R.E. III, pp. 387-89 (under Charity).

[4] E.R.E., V, p, 502 ; Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp.. 14, 50, 699 ; Baillie NBE, *A Digest of Muhammadan Law*, 2nd edition, London, 1875, p. 555. Herklots' *Islam in India*, pp. 113-14.

[5] The *mahadana* (great gifts) are sixteen in number. E.R.E., III, p. 389. Phillips in his "An account of the Religion,

People seem to have been more charitable of disposition in Mughal days than in the twentieth century. Abul Fazl admires the Indians who were always ready to come to the succour of

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Manners and Learning of the People of Malabar" details the various acts regarded as virtuous by the natives. It includes "alms consisting of boiled rice to feed the poor, the Brahmans, other holymen (or alms consisting in garments), *Kamatanum* (when a rich man gives his daughter to a poor man or help a poor man to settle his daughter in marriage), *Fischoranatanum* (an alms consisting of money) to build places of worship, to make ponds of water for the convenience of men and beasts, to build homes for travellers, to build hospitals, to plant gardens, to erect water-bandels for drinking water, to plant trees on the highways and to bring up orphans, and assist learned men to live comfortably that they may be able to instruct the ignorant." (pp. 18-19). Also see Orme's *Fragments*, p. 434.

[6] For details see Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 113-14 ; E.R.E., V, p. 502. The legal alms may be given to the following classes of pilgrims who are unable to defray the cost of their journey ; faqirs and beggars, debtors unable to pay their debts, champions in the cause of God, travellers who are without food, proselytes to Islam. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 114.

[7] The duty is not incumbent on a man who owes debts equal to or exceeding the whole amount of his property nor is it due on the necessaries of life such as dwelling houses, clothes, furniture, etc. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 114.

[8] *Maasir*, I, p. 526 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 434. Even Marathas levied special occasional contributions to build public works like temples. Raghubir Singh, *Malwa in Transition*, p. 332.

[9] *Maasir*, I, pp. 423-25, for a mosque built during Babar's reign refer to J. I. H. Vol. XI, pp. 190-91. For Mahabat Khan's mosque at Peshawar, *Islamic Culture*, Vol XIV, No. 1, January 1940, pp. 30-32. Also see Oriental College Magazine, Lahore, Vol. 16, Pt. I, November 1939, pp. 59-60. For mosque built by Jahanara Begam at Kashmir refer to P. Saran's *Provincial Government of the Mughals*, p. 418 ; Phillips' *Account of East Indies*, pp. 18-19.

anyone, may be a stranger, in distress and would "grudge neither property, life nor reputation in his cause."[10] Alms were frequently bestowed on the needy and the deserving. Mirat-i-Ahmadi writes : "Let them be charitable, according to their means, to all religious mendicant, and to all poor, indigent, and naked persons who will not open their mouths to ask for the means of subsistence and have secluded themselves from the world."[11] Guru Nanak who lived during the period said : "The wealth of those who have not given alms shall slip away."[12] Though no hard and fast rules were adhered to, yet Hindus preferred to give away edibles like rice, corn, grain, etc. in charity[13] while Muhammadans believed in offering garments, blankets, sheets and shoes.'[14]

Liberality of the Hindus

The liberality of the Hindus had particularly been commended by several travellers[15] including Alberuni who mentions alms-giving as the daily routine of a Hindu[16] who strongly believed that such acts would atone for all his sins."[17] Tavernier corroborates and writes : "They would gladly offer to the travellers whenever they required anything to eat or drink."[18] Guru Nanak's travels afford several instances.[19] Brahmans, the usual recipients of such alms, were never refused.[20] Even Tukaram did not hesitate to part with his hard-earned money when demanded by a Brahman.[21] Money was also offered to the needy and deserving.[22] Monthly allowances were fixed for widows, the pious and the needy.[23]

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[10] *Ain,* III, p. 9.

[11] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi,* translated from Persian by James Bird, London, MDCCCXXXV.

[12] Macauliffe, *op. cit.*, I, p. 14.

[13] Della Valle, I, p. 69 ; Travernier, I, p. 225 ; Thevenot, p. 93 ; Phillips' *Account of East Indies*, pp. 18-19 ; Macauliffe, I, pp. 14, 206. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 434.

[14] *Maasir*, I, pp. 525, 693, etc. It was the general practice but should not be taken as a rule. During Deccan campaigns Abul Fazl used to distribute cooked *Khichri* among the poor and needy throughout the day. *Maasir*, I, p. 127,

[15] Tavernier, I, p. 225 ; Della Valle, I, p. 69 ; Thevenot, p. 93 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 431.

[16] Alberuni's *India*, II (Sachau), p. 149 ; Orme's *Fragments*, p. 434.

[17] Orme's *Fragments*, p. 431.

Abul Fazl used to visit the houses of the *dervishes* at night to distribute money.[24] Sometimes an ascetic or *faqir* undertook a fast unto death to compel a rich *bania* or a pious audience to give him a fixed sum of money,[25] or even to accede to some other demand.[26] When on a pilgrimage, it was customary to give as much money in alms as possible.[27]

Charity by Mughal kings

Mughal kings were very particular in giving away a large sum of money in charity. Akbar had fixed daily, monthly and yearly allowances for the deserving.[28] Abul Fazl, who devotes an ain to 'Alms', writes that a crore of *dams* was kept ready in the audience hall for distribution among the poor and needy.[29] Money and bread were freely distributed to the poor on the fulfilment of a desire such as the birth of a son.[30] Festivals like *Nauroz*,[31] *Salgirah*,[32] *Ids*,[33] *Shab-i-Barat*,[34] etc. were the special occasions for a king to show his generosity, and Mughal emperors were never found lacking.

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[18] Tavernier, I, p 225. Also see J.R.A.S., Bombay, Vol. III, p. 18.

[19] Guru Nanak and Shaikh Ibrahim were served with a basin of milk by an unknown villager in Pak Pattan where they stayed for a while. Macauliffe, I, p. 88.

[20] *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. IV, p. 332.

[21] J.R.A.S., Bombay Branch, Vol. III, pp. 16, 23.

[22] Tavernier, I, p. 52.

[23] *Maasir*, I, p. 526. Even marriage expenses of the poor children were defrayed. *Ibid.*

[24] *Maasir*, I, p. 126.

[25] Tavernier, II, p. 173 relates how a Brahman priest at Patna demanded Rs. 2,000 and 27 cubits of cloth under a similar threat. Also see Thevenot, p. 93. Even Muslim mendicants obtained alms from Hindus by resorting to this practice. M. S. Commissariat, *History of Gujarat*. For the Hindu custom of 'Dying to redress a grievance' refer to Journal of American Oriental Society, Vol. 21.

[26] *Asiatick Researches*, Vol. IV, pp. 332, 334. Sometimes the Brahmans were employed even for realizing the debts by calling upon the debtor to discharge his debt within a stipulated period.

[27] *Storia*, II, p. 244; *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 272.

Charity was also resorted to, to avert the evil effects of the stars, especially on eclipse days.[35] When on his death-bed, Aurangzeb refused to give an elephant and a diamond in charity as desired by the astrologers ; he considered it to be a practice of the Hindus. The Emperor, however, sent Rs. 4,000 to be distributed among the poor.[36] In his last will he wrote that the three hundred and five rupees earned by him as wages from copying the Quran might be distributed among the *faqirs* on the day of his death.[37] Akbar, on the other hand, is said to have given away to the Jain monks 500 cows to be distributed in charity after his recovery from serious illness.[38]

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[28] *Ain*, I (1939), p, 276. For Gulbadan's charities refer to her *Humayun-Nama*, trans., pp. 76-77.

[29] *Ain*, I, p. 14. A separate treasurer had been appointed for charitable donations. *Ibid.* Also see *Ain*, I (1939), p. 276.

[30] See Plate 21, "The Library of A Chester Beatty," Vol. II.

[31] P. N. Chopra, *Society and Culture during the Mughal Age*, second edition, 1963, pp. 84-89.

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 89-93.

[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 103-61.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[35] R & B, I, pp. 160, 267. When Begam Sahiba was confined to bed due to burns, various charitable measures were adopted. Prisoners were released ; debts were remitted ; maintenance allowances were restored. *Maasir*, Vol. I, p. 739. Also see Journal Punjab Historical Society, Vol. X p. 4.

[36] E & D, VII, p. 386. Also see M.A. (Urdu), p. 28.

[37] Sarkar, *Anecdotes af Aurangzib*, p. 46.

[38] A. N., Vol. III (trans), p. 313, quoted in A. L. Srivastava, *Akbar the Great*, Vol. I, p. 398.

The custom of *Zakat*, it seems, was not observed by the majority of Muhammadans, who would try their best to avoid it. Badauni relates the instance of Makhdum-ul-Mulk who made over his property to his wife at the end of the year for the same purpose and took it back.[39]

Provision of drinking water by the roadside

Hindus and Muhammadans, the former in particular, considered it highly meritorious to make arrangements for drinking water on the roadways especially during the summer season.[40] Linschoten found large water-pots left on the roads in Cambay for the same purpose.[41] The rich would spend huge amounts of money to dig wells[42] and construct tanks[43] for storing water to be availed of during times of scarcity. Jahangir in the 14th year of his reign ordered for the digging of wells at every three *kroh* (12,000 yards) from Agra to Delhi.[44] Bernier[45] and Thevenot[46] refer to the existence of these wells.

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[39] Badauni, II, p. 203 ; Tr. II, p. 206.

[40] *Early Travels*, p. 325 ; *Storia*, I, p. 214 ; Linschoten, I, p. 254 ; Ketelaar, The Dutch Ambassador to the Great Mughal, in 1711 saw a stone *baoli* or water well built at Shazpur in Gwalior State in memory of a dog by a Hindu merchant. *Travels of Dutch Ambassador Ketelaar*, trans. into English in Punjab Historical Society Journal, Vol. X, p. 85. Phillips' Account, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

[41] Linschoten, I, p. 254. Also see Tavernier, I, p. 225.

[42] *Early Travels*, p. 325 ; Thevenot, Chapter XXXIV, p. 81. and Francis Goldie, *The First Christian Mission to the Great Mogul*, p. 60.

[43] Della Valle, I, p. 32 ; Linschoten, I, 254 ; *Storia*, III, p. 242. For a pond built by Raja Todar Mal refer to A.N. III, p. 569 ; Tr. III, p. 862.

[44] R & B, II, p. 100. A well ascribed to Humayun's reign has been discovered in a village called Pilakhnab about 14 miles from Aligarh. For details refer to J.I.H. Vol. XI, pp. 190-91. For a well built by a copper-smith from the money he received in charity refer to J.R.A.S. Bombay, Vol. III, p. 16.

[45] Bernier (Smith's edition), p. 284.

[46] Thevenot, III, pp. 42-43.

Gopi Talao in Surat has been referred to by many a traveller.[47] Thevenot writes about it thus : "It is a work worthy of a king and it may be compared to the fairest that the Romans ever made for public benefit."[48]

Provision of wayside rest-houses

The Brahman wife of Abdur Rahim of Lucknow built houses, made a garden, a serai and a tank after her husband's demise.[49] Rai Gaurdhan Suraj Dhwaj who flourished during the reign of Jahangir is said to have built serais and tanks on the road from Delhi to Lahore.[50] Serais or inns were also constructed by rich Hindus and Muhammadans as a charitable measure at all important places for the convenience of the travellers.[51] Sher Shah's serais,[52] Salim Khan's latter additions,[53] Nurjahan's Nur Mahal-ki-Serai at Agra[54] and a similar one at Patna[55] and Begam Sahib's famous caravan-serai at Kirki[56] deserve special mention. Fruit trees were planted on road-sides for the benefit of the public.[57] In order to earn spiritual merit the pious people got small platforms about 3 yards in length constructed near these serais.[58] These were meant to help weary porters to put off and take up the luggage conveniently without anybody's help.[59] Rudolf and two other Christian fathers saw such stone tables at almost every step after crossing the river Tapti on their way to the court of the Great Mughal.[60] Two poor houses were constructed by Akbar in 1583 A.D.[61] Jahangir ordered for the preparation of *Ghawarkhanahs* throughout the length and breadth of this country. Cooked food was to be kept ready for *dervishes*, devotees and pilgrims in these places.[62] The author of the *Maasir-ul-Umra* praises Farid Murtuza Khan

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[47] Della Valle, I, p. 32 ; Thevenot, p. 34 ; Fryer (old), p. 104 ; T. A., II (trans.), p. 384 ; Anup Talao has also been referred to vide *Babarnama*, II, Tr., pp 204, 212, 219 and the A. N., III, p. 246 ; Tr. III, p. 384 ; Jahangir mentions a similar tank called Kapur Talao ; *Tuzuk*, Tr., II, pp. 68-69. For controversy regarding site of the tank see Hodivala's *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, pp. 545, 533.

[48] For details see Thevenot, pp. 25, 35. For the construction of a great bath at Lahore by Farid Murtaza Khan, Akbar's courtier, see *Maasir*, I, p. 526.

[49] *Maasir*, I (trans.), p. 50. For reference to serais, tanks, mosques, etc. built by Shaikh Farid see *Maasir*, I, p. 525.

[50] *Maasir*, I, p. 574. For another tank built by Raja Bir Singh Dev Bundela, see *Ibid.*, pp. 423-25.

[51] Thevenot, Chapt. xxxiv, p. 81 ; Storia, III, p. 242 ; Bernier, p. 233 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 246 ; *Early Travels*, p. 325 ; *John Marshall in India*, pp. 112, 118, 125, etc. He says that one can stay in a serai for a month at the rate of 4 or 5 pice per month, p. 118. Edward Terry in *Early Travels*, p. 311 ; De Laet, p. 32. Also J. I. H., Vol. X, 1931, p. 245.

[52] T. A., II, pp. 174-75. For details see K. R. Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, pp. 389-91. E & D, VI, p. 188 ; IV, p. 418. P. Saran's *Provincial Government of the Mughals*, p. 410. Also see *Storia*, I, p. 116.

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[53] T. A., II, p. 190. He is said to have added another room to each of the serais of Sher Shah from Nilab to Bengal. T. A., II, p. 190.

[54] Petermundy, II (Hak. Society), p. 78.

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 159.

[56] Journal Punjab Historical Society, Vol. II, No. 2, p. 15. Tavernier, I, p. 41. For serais built by Akbar refer to A. N., III (Tr.), p. 155 ; *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 222.

[57] *Ain*, II, p. 353 ; Phillips' Account, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19. For Jahangir refer to Thevenot, Pt. III, pp. 42-43 ; Bernier (Smith), p. 284 and for a serai built in Aurangzeb's reign at Nurabad (14 miles from Gwalior along Delhi-Gwalior-Bombay Trunk Road) refer to Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XVI, No. 3, Sept. 1940, pp. 592-95. For serais at Surat refer to Godinho's Travels (1663) *Calcutta Review*, Vol. XCIII, p. 69.

[58] R & B., I, p. 420,

[59] Thevenot, Chapt. XXXIV, p. 81.

[60] Francis Goldie, *The First Christian Mission to the Court of the Great Mogul*, p. 60.

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 95. They were named as Khairpura and Dharmpura. Later on another place called Jogipura was built. *Ain*, I, (1939), p. 210.

[62] *Tuzuk* (Lowe), pp. 35, 61.

Bukhari, a courtier of Akbar, for his magnanimity. Several serais and mosques are ascribed to him. He had made it a custom to feed one thousand persons daily.[63] Husain Ali Khan's *bulghur khanahs* (barley houses) where he served the *shaikhs* and faqirs personally were well-known.[64] During the acute famine conditions in Kambhalmir, Nawazish Khan was generous enough to sell his dishes of gold and silver for helping the people.[65]

Charity to birds and beasts

Strict believers in the transmigration of souls,[66] the Hindus were particularly charitable towards birds and beasts.[67] Hospitals were constructed at some places, specially in southern India,[68] for their treatment and maintenance. Manrique saw cows and calves "clothed in fine coats buttoned and tied over their chests and bellies" in Gujarat.[69] Quite frequently a bania would be seen scattering flour and sugar to feed little ants.[70]

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[63] *Massir*, I, p. 526.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 638.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 400.

[66] Mandelslo, p. 58.

[67] Particularly cows. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 216 ; Thevenot, Pt. III, p. 36. Purchas' *India*, pp. 92-93. Orme's *Fragments*, p. 431. Also see E.R.E., *op. cit.*, III, p. 389.

[68] Particularly at Cambay. Samuel Purchas' *India*, pp. 92-93. Linschoten, I, p. 254. For a hospital in Surat for the treatment of cows, horses, goats and other animals see Ovington, p. 390. The traveller refers to another hospital there meant for preservation of the bugs (Ovington, p. 301). Also see Stavorinus, II, pp. 489-90, who mentions the yearly revenue of the hospital in A.D. 1774-75 when it had suffered considerably to be Rs. 6000. Also see "Notice of a remarkable hospital for animals at Surat (June 1893)." Journal Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. I, pp. 96-97. Also see J. R. A. S., Bombay Branch, Vol. XXIV, p. 356 for a reference to the hospital in 1756.

[69] Manrique, II, p. 102.

[70] Linschoten, I, p. 254 ; Ovington, p. 30. *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 216 ; Thevenot, *op. cit*,, p. 36 ; Stavorinus,

Stables for cows, buffaloes, mares, camels, goats and sheep were also built by munificent persons. Rai Gaurdhan, who got them constructed on the style of those in a foreign land, deserves special mention.[71]

Hospitals for the public

Public hospitals, too, are referred to in Mughal records. An instruction from Jahangir[72] ordered their establishment in the principal towns of the Empire where the physicians were to attend upon the sick. All the expenses were to be defrayed from the royal exchequer. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*[73] gives some details about their working.[74]

Charitable funds of the state

We may refer here to *Bait-ul-mal*[75] which was in fact the charitable department's store house. It looked after the belongings of those left without heirs and escheated property of the nobles.[76] Its contents, according to Muhammadan law, could only be spent in works of charity. Jahangir's firman of 1605 clearly laid it down that its contents should be spent in building

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II, p. 486. Once Tukaram would not drive away the bees settled on his body saying, "One should not spare his own body when he can do other good." (J. R. A. S. Bombay, Vol. III, p. 20). For Tukaram's other charitable acts refer to *Bhakta Lilamrita*, trans. into English, J. R. A. S. Bombay, Vol. III, p. 18.

[71] *Massir*, I, p. 574.

[72] *Tuzuk* (Lowe), p. 8. The Eighth Institute.

[73] *Mirat* (I.o) fol. p. 731a in Saran's *Provincial Government of the Mughals*, pp. 419-20.

[74] Elliot's views (V, p. 513) have no justification in view of the contemporary records.

[75] *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Vol. I, p. 598. Akbar himself supervised the Religious and Charity Department. Saran *op. cit.*, p. 404.

[76] Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 170. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Vol. I (G. O. Series, 1927), pp. 266-67.

mosques and serais, repairing broken bridges and digging tanks and wells.[77] Aurangzeb refused to lay his hands upon this source even when his treasury had been emptied during the Deccan wars.[78] He made elaborate arrangements for the proper conduct of this department.[79] The Qazi of Ahmedabad was instructed to supply 150 coats and 150 blankets to the beggars every winter out of this account besides Rs. 6,000 allotted for the clothing of the poor.[80] The Emperor (Aurangzeb) in his religious zeal went to the length of pardoning Mir Habibullah of Jaunpur, the Amir of poll-tax on non-Muslims, who had misappropriated over Rs. 40,000 from the Imperial treasury as "the money of this sinner (Aurangzeb) sunk in sin has been spent by means of this my agent in deeds of charity."[81]

Charity in holy places

Among Muhammadans it was considered meritorious to spend money in charity at their holy places like Mecca, Madina, Meshad, etc. There are numerous instances when the Mughal kings[82] and their nobles[83] would send money besides clothes, blankets, etc. to be distributed among the needy there.[84] Aziz Koka was liberal enough to undertake to bear the cost of the maintenance of the tomb of the Prophet for fifty years.[85] Nawab Haji Muhammad Anwar-ud-din Khan[86] distributed nine lakhs of rupees among "the great men and the gentle" of holy Mecca. Sahibji, the wife of Amir Khan, also spent large sums at Mecca.[87] Lashkar Khan, a noble of Aurangzeb's court, founded serais in Meshad.[88]

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[77] *Tuzuk*, 4, quoted in Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 170.

[78] Manucci, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 178.

[79] In 1690, Aurangzeb appointed provincial qazis as trustees of the branch of the *Bait-ul-mal* of their provinces. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

[80] *Ibid.*, p. 177.

[81] Sarkar, *Anecdotes of Aurangzib*, p. 93.

[82] Akber sent five lakhs of rupees and 10,000 robes through Abu Tarab Gujarati to be distributed among the needy at Mecca. Shahjahan likewise sent 5 lakhs of rupees and goods worth Rs. 2 lakhs and forty thousand to be sold and the money distributed among the needy there. *Maasir*, I, pp. 143, 825. Kh. Abid was appointed the leader of the Haj Party in 1676 by the Emperor. He was to take royal presents to Mecca and Medina. *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* (Bib-Ind) 1871, p. 143. Also see Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi*, English trans., Part I, p. 17.

[83] *Massir*, I, pp. 326-27 and 834. Kh. Abid visited Mecca in 1657 A.D. *Nizamul Mulk Asaf Jah* I, by Dr. Yusuf Khan, p. 2.

SECTION II

FASTS

Fasts among Hindus

From ancient times fasts have been observed with religious fervour in the Indian society.[89] The purposes of fasting as a religious, magical or social custom are various. As an act of penitence[90] or of propitiation, as a preparatory rite before some acts of sacramental eating or an initiation or a mourning ceremony or one of a series of purifactory rites,[91] as a means of inducing dreams and visions and a method of adding force to magical rites,[92] it has been resorted to by both communities. Alberuni describes at length this custom which he declares to be "voluntary and supererogatory" with the Hindus.[93] Abul Fazl has written about its twelve different kinds, and enumerates 29 days on which a Hindu was obliged to fast for 24 hours every year.[94] It includes the anniversaries of the ten *avatars* as well as the eleventh day of each lunar fortnight of every month.[95]

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[84] Rs. 60,000 were sent to Najaf and Karbala as a present on the recovery of Muhmmad Azam. Rs. one lakh and twenty thousand were distributed among the poor of Mecca and Medina. Sarkar, *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign*, p. 72.

[85] *Massir*, I, pp. 326-27.

[86] He received the title of the *Fairashi* (one who spreads carpets). Burhan's *Tuzuk-i-Walajahi*, English Trans., *op. cit.*, I, p. 17.

[87] *Maasir*, I, p. 252. Also see Gulbadan Begam, *Humayun-Nama* (trans.), pp. 69-72.

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 834.

[89] For this custom see Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V, pp. 259-64 ; Dubois, *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, I, pp. 271-75 ; Alberuni (Sachau) II, p. 172 ; *Ain*, III (Sarkar), pp. 327-28 ; and Phillips' *Account*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-93.

[90] For details regarding the fast undertaken by a Brahman before commencing his studies in Vedas refer to "The Story of Tukarama" in Journal Bombay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, January, 1849, Vol. III, p. 21.

Besides these obligatory fasts most Hindus abstained from food frequently as a means of self-discipline[96] and on hygienic grounds.[97] Thevenot corroborates it, though with some exaggeration, that "none of them let a fortnight pass over without mortifying themselves by abstinence."[98] They would even resort to this practice to cure several diseases.[99] In fact, a fast and even the practice of austerity in life were considered to be of religious merit.[100] Brahmans[101] and women[102] were naturally more particular about it. These fasts might be complete or partial and for a longer or shorter period,[103] in the case of either category of people. The longer fasts might last for a month[104] or even six weeks which Mandelslo rightly regards as nothing less than a miracle.[105] It was usual to take water sometimes mixed with *chirita*[106] on all these fast days. Fruits, sweetmeats and milk preparations were allowed to be taken during certain obligatory fasts.[107] The curious reader may refer to the *Ain-i-Akbari* for a contemporary account of all the details.[108] It was forbidden to take meat, pulse (*adas cicerlens*), the bean *lobiya* (*dobchos sinesis*), honey and molasses during the fast days.[109] It was equally objectionable to anoint oneself with oil, shave or to have sexual intercourse.[110] Playing of games like *chaupar* or *solah* etc. was also prohibited.[111] It was considered highly meritorious to give alms and sleep on the ground on these days.[112]

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[91] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V, p. 758.

[92] For a fast before writing magic see Crooke's *Islam*, p. 220. Also refer to *Hindu Ethics* by John Mackenzie, pp. 233-40.

[93] Alberuni (Sachau), II, p. 172.

[94] *Ain* (Sarkar), III, p. 326. For its various kinds see *ibid.*, pp. 326-27. Alberuni (Sachau), II, pp. 172-73 ; Dubois, I, pp. 271-75. Mandelslo and William Hedges describe August and September as months of fasting. Mandelslo, p. 54 ; Hedges, II, p. cccxiv. Also see Phillips' *Account*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-93.

[95] *Ain* (Sarkar), III, p, 326 ; Dubois, I, pp. 271-72.

[96] *Ganda-Lekmala*, I, pp. 6, 31 ; *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, p. 98.

[97] Thevenot, *op. cit.*, p. 115 ; Dubois, I, p. 274.

[98] *Ibid.* ; Pyrard, I, p. 479.

[99] Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 274.

[100] Mandelslo, p. 54 ; Hamilton, I (MDCCXXVII), p. 129. Purchas' *India*, p 92. Also see Thevenot, p. 93, for fasting as a penance to acquire divine blessings. Phillips' *Account*, pp. 88-93. The *Vaishnavites* of Nadia were very particular about the fasts "Social and Religious Life in Medieval Bengal" by Taponath Chakravarty, *Indian Culture*, Vol. X, No. 3, January-March, 1944.

[101] Mandelslo, p. 53 ; William Hedges, Vol. II, p. cccxiv, f.n.

Fasts among Muslims

While Muhammadanism is not an ascetic religion, yet the value of fasting as a discipline and good deed is clearly recognized and it is said that "the very smell of the mouth of a keeper of fast is more agreeable to God than the smell of musk."[113] Penitential fasting was highly commended by Muhammad himself.[114] Every Muhammadan is obliged to fast during the whole month of Ramzan[115] when none may eat or drink between dawn and sunset.[116] The fast was vigorously and strictly observed during Mughal days.[117] They would neither drink or smoke nor have intercourse with women.[118] The orthodox prayed day and night.[119] The sick, infirm, travellers, idiots, and young children were, however, exempted.[120] In 1650 A.D., when Shahjahan was over sixty and could not tolerate the rigours of the Ramzan fast, learned *maulvis* declared after consulting the Quran, that the king should give money in charity instead. Rupees sixty thousand were distributed among the poor that year.[121] Akbar was not used to fasting, as a remark of a Christian missionary Rudolf suggests.[122] Aurangzeb strictly observed all the fasts and would abstain from food even on Fridays.[123] A fast was sometimes undertaken to give solemnity to an occasion. Humayun fasted for a day when oaths of confederacies were taken.[124]

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[102] Thevenot, p. 115.

[103] *Ain* (Sarkar), III, pp.326-27.

[104] Thevenot, Chapt. XLVII, p. 82 ; Mandelslo, p. 54. Purchas' *India*, p. 92. Tavernier, II, p. 173.

[105] Mandelslo, p. 54.

[106] A bitter root. It is said to be useful against distempers and strengthens the gums. Thevenot, Chapt. XLVII, p. 82. Mandelslo, p. 54. Also see Pyrard, I, p. 379.

[107] Hedges, II, p. cccxiv f.n. ; also see *Ain* (Sarkar), III, pp. 326-27.

[108] *Ain* (Sarkar), III, pp. 327-28.

[109] *Ibid*, p. 328.

[110] *Ibid*. ; Dubois, I, pp. 272-73.

[111] *Ain* (Sarkar), III, p. 328.

[112] *Ibid*.

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[113] *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. V, p. 764 ; Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 124.

[114] For details see E.R.E., V, p. 764.

[115] The 13th, 14th and 15th days of each month are also generally observed as fasting days and also the day of *Ashura*, the 10th day of the month of Muharram. E.R.E., Vol. V, p. 764. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 124. The other fasts observed by the devout are the six days following the *Id-ul-Fitr*, the Monday and Thursday of every week, the month of Shaban and on alternate days. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 124. For a fast after a death, see Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 91 and 105.

[116] The sick, infirm, travellers, idiots and young children are, however, exempted. Also see Ovington, p. 243 : E. R. E., V, p. 764 ; Herklots' *Islam*, p. 112 ;

[117] Ovington, p. 243 ; Della Valle, p. 429 ; Storia, I, pp. 158-59. Letters received by East India Company, Vol. IV, p. 10 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 73.

[118] Della Valle, p. 429 ; Herklots' *Islam*, p. 205 ; Ovington, p. 243 ; *Jahangir's India*, p. 73. The use of betel leaves, tobacco or snuff is also forbidden. Herklots' *Islam*, p. 112.

[119] Ovington, p. 243.

[120] E. R. E., V, p. 764.

[121] Inayat Khan, *Shahjahan-Nama*, E & D, VII, p. 97.

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[122] Rudolf, the Christian missionary, is said to have induced Akbar to fast for a day. *First Christian Mission to Great Mogul*, p. 95. Also refer to "The Annual Relation of Father Fernao Guerreior S. J. from 1607-8" by Re. H. Hoster S. J. in Journal Punjab Historical Society, Vol. VII, p. 55.

[123] E & D, VII, p. 157 Muhammad did not ordain fast on Fridays. See Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, pp. 131-32 ; Herklots' *Islam*, pp. 206, 282.

[124] Jauhar's *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat* (trans.) by Charles Stewart, p. 99.

CHAPTER 4

Houses and Furniture

SECTION I

HOUSES

General

Houses in India have always been built with due consideration to climatic conditions. As most of the country falls within the tropics, it has ever been the endeavour of the Indian architect to use architectural devices like pierced screens or lattice windows to act as a mitigator of excessive light and heat. As in Assyria and Persia, the flat-terraced roofs, used for coolness, sleeping and even exercise, predominate[1] here also. An astute observer like Bernier rightly reprimands the Europeans who overlooked this basic fact in the construction of Indian homes and complained of the architectural inferiority of Indian buildings as compared to those in the West. "What is useful and proper at Paris, London or Amsterdam," he writes, "would be entirely out of place in a different climate like that of Delhi."[2] Comfort and convenience of the dweller were mainly kept in view while planning construction of buildings.[3]

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[1] Barrister Fletcher and Barrister F. Fletcher, *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, 4th edition, London, pp. 440-41.

[2] Bernier, p. 240.

[3] Fryer (old edition), p. 199. For a photo, 'Masons building a wall' refer to Plate LIX, Fig. 1, Indian Museum Collection, No. 201.

Mughal palaces

The dwelling of a king, raja or prince was the chief attraction in a capital or a city in which such royal residences were situated. Fortified by a wall and moat, these fortress-palaces were usually situated on the bank of a river or a stream. Some of these were situated on rocky eminences "just turning into or overhanging lakes or artificial pieces of water"[4] and created a most picturesque combination.[5] These palaces consisted of two parts—inner and outer. The inner part contained the quarters of the queens, and the princesses, the private council hall, the retiring rooms, etc. while the outer part comprised Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-Khas, the arsenal, the store-house, etc. The palaces also contained pleasure gardens, flower gardens, groves, tanks etc. in their proper places. The Mughal gardens copied from earlier gardens of Turkestan and Persia were invariably square or rectangular in shape with fountains and pavilions. Running water or canal was another feature of the Mughal gardens. The principal pavilion, such as the exquisite black marble *baradari* in the garden of Kashmir's Shalimar, or the octagonal building which once adorned the great tank of the ruined garden at Bijbehara, served as retreats from the glare of the mid-day sun.[6] There were also pavilions for witnessing animal fights and for musical entertainments. Stables for horses, elephants, cows, etc. were also provided. Akbar's[7] palaces at Agra,[8]

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[4] Fatephur Sikri had a large artificial lake on the north-west to mitigate the dust and stifling heat of an Indian summer. E. B. Havell, *Indian Architecture,* London, 1913, p. 164.

[5] Fergusson James, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture,* Vol. II, p. 170.

[6] See C. M. Villiers Stuart, *Gardens of the Great Mughals.*

[7] Nothing of importance now remains of Babar's buildings. Havell, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

[8] This great stronghold takes the form of an irregular semi-circle. One of its most remarkable features is the massive enclosure walls which consist of a solid sandstone rampart just under 70 feet in height and nearly one and a half miles

Allahabad[9] and Lahore may serve as good examples of the Mughal conception of royal palaces.[10] Percy Brown describes these palace-fortresses at some length in his *Indian Architecture*. All these palaces had gardens with running water which flowed in channels into reservoirs of stone, jasper and marble. In all the rooms and halls there were fountains and reservoirs of proportionate size.

Akbar's palace-fortress at Agra was the first to be constructed,[11] as is evident from its irregular grouping of halls and rooms and the want of symmetry in its lay-out. It is said to have contained "500 edifices of red sandstone in the fine style of Bengal and Gujarat." These were, however, subsequently destroyed by Shahjahan to make room for his more sumptuous marble pavilions.[12] From the vestiges of the two palace buildings, Akbari Mahal and the Jahangiri Mahal, it appears that they were designed on the usual scheme of a range of double storeyed chambers surrounding a central courtyard.[13] Similar in conception, though smaller in area, was the Lahore Fort. This rectangular-shaped palace-fortress was divided

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in circumference. Its dimensions allow a number of commodious rooms to form the interior providing quarters for a considerable guard. Within the area enclosed by the walls of this fortress there were built, according to the *Ain*, upwards of 500 edifices of red standstone, in the fine style of Bengal and Gujarat. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture*, The Islamic Period, Bombay, p. 100.

[9] It is now however partly dismantled. There now remains only a *baradari* or pavilion known as *zenana*.

[10] Akbar's buildings strictly speaking are Rajput rather than Mughal. Havell. *op. cit.*, p. 163. Akbar's palace at Agra and buildings at Fatehpur Sikri are essentially a new development of the same Buddhist-Hindu craft tradition which had created the architecture of the preceding Mussalman dynasty. *Ibid.*

[11] It was completed in 8 years (1565 A.D.—1573 A.D.) at a cost of 35 lakhs of rupees. A. Goswami, and S. K. Saraswati, *Glimpses of Mughal Architecture*, p. 23.

[12] Jahangiri Mahal was perhaps the residence of the heir-apparent. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

[13] Goswami and Saraswati, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

longitudinally into two approximately equal spaces, that "towards the south being reserved for the official and service buildings while in the space at the rear were grouped the royal palaces." In between these two parts were a row of buildings acting as a screen.[14] Akbar's palace-fortress at Allahabad is mostly in ruins and there now remains only a *baradari* known as the *zenana*.[15] The chief features of the buildings at Fatehpur Sikri—"the planning, the wide-projecting drepstones and their supporting brackets, for shade and protection from rain, the double roofs domed or vaulted for coldness"—are all dictated by considerations of comfort and convenience rather than imitation of other buildings.[16] The palace enclosure in the fort of Delhi[17] is symmetrical in its arrangements. It has four parts— a large central quadrangle containing the Diwan-i-Am or Hall of Public Audience on each side of which are ornamental gardens ; and there is a range of marble palaces on one side facing the gardens, the other side commanding an open view of the river. As orginally planned, there were to be six marble structures—on the outer side the pavilions were closed except for screened windows and other similar openings. Included in this range of buildings were a hall of private audience and a luxurious *hammam* or bathing establishment and between each structure there were wide courts and terraces. The finest of all these buildings were the Hall of Audience and the Rang Mahal.[18] The spacious gardens were often elaborate and comprehensive compositions and were a special feature of the Mughal architectural projects.[19]

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[14] *Ibid.*

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] Havell, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

[17] 'Neither Jahangir nor Shahjahan had Akbar's genius for constructive statesmanship and so far as the personal influence went they only helped Indian craftsmen to clothe in more costly materials the creative ideas of the preceding century. Sumptuous decoration and lavish expenditure in material rather than intellectuality in design were the characteristics of the later period of Mogul architecture." Havell, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200.

[18] Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. III.

Hindu palaces

Most of the Hindu palaces built during the 16th and 17th centuries, particularly in the capitals of the native states in Rajputana, viz., Bikaner, Jodhpur, Jaisalmir, Orchha, Datia, Udaipur and the city of Amber (Jaipur), do not follow any particular style[20] ancient or modern and appear to lie, as Fergussan notes : "a vast congeries of public and private apartments grouped as a whole more for convenience than effect."[21] But their situation on "rocky eminences, jutting into or overhanging lakes or artificial pieces of water" makes them "one of the most picturesque combinations."[22] These palaces, as already stated, are unsystematic in their compositions and are built more for convenience and comfort than for architectural considerations. As is but natural, the Mughal style (Indo-Persian) dominates the planning, composition and construction of these royal residences which were usually situated "at the mouth of a rocky gorge, and around a petty lake, the whole securely reposing under the protection of a range of fortresses on the ridge above. In the central position is the great pile forming the open courtyard or *darbar* square, which is approached by means of a fine staircase and through an imposing gateway. Two halls within the square were prominent, the Diwan-i-Am or Hall of Audience and the entrance to the palace itself both of which in style are apparently improvisations on the existing architecture of the Mughals. Almost facing this Diwan-i-Am but depicting an entirely different aspect of the building is the facade and entrance hall to the palace apartments. Beyond this *darbar* square and leading out of it is one range of structures consisting of minor palaces,

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[19] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

[20] Fergusson, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 170.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Ibid.*

zenana apartments, courtyards, terraces and gardens, covering a large space and forming the minor precincts of the palace."[23] From this an idea may be formed of the general character of the palaces. *Jahangir Mandir* built at Orchha (Bundelkhand) by Raja Bir Singh Deo (1605-26) is a fine example of an Indian medieval castle. It is "picturesque, artistic, and romantic besides being a superb example of the builder's art. A doorway on the southern facade leads into a ground floor hall. Passing through it, one finds oneself in a square courtyard of 125 feet side around which the entire interior structures are arranged. The interior quadrangle has no large structures, it is a wide open space containing a raised platform with a fountain plying in the centre."[24] It is in reality a simple composition. This great palace was obviously designed so that every part fulfilled its function and expressed purpose, its rooms were devised for seclusion, its terraces for the cool air, its corridors for convenience, each compartment, court, hall and passage had its specific use and was introduced into the scheme in accord with the requirements of its inmates.[25] In order to maintain communication with the various parts, each group of rooms was approached by a continuous hanging balcony. The palace at Gwalior is an interesting example of a Hindu palace. The dimensions of the palace are 300 ft. by 160 ft. On each side it is 200 ft. high and has two underground storeys.[26] Raja Bir Singh's palace at Datia, built in the year 1620, is slightly smaller than the *Jahangir Mandir*. It consists of a congeries of large subterranean halls, descending for several storeys. A complete suite of underground apartments or *tahkhana* for retreat during summer, of almost the same size as the structure above, was another feature of this palace. In the middle of the courtyard was the five-storeyed building containing the royal dwelling apartments. The central edifice was connected to the "ranges of rooms by which it was surrounded, by means of four flying corridors or bridges in double storeys carried across from the middle of each side."[27]

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[23] Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-30.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] Fergusson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 175.

Prominent among medieval Indian palaces is that of Amber, once the seat of the rulers of Jaipur State. Its construction was started by Man Singh in 1592 and was completed by Jai Singh, I (1625-66). In the richness of its architecture this palace rivals Akbar's contemporary palace at Fatehpur Sikri. With its drawing and dining rooms, its kitchens, lavatories,[28] arrangement for sprinkling water on *khas tattis* by means of iron pipes having holes, etc. it gives complete idea about a medieval Indian palace.[29]

Palaces in the South

The South is not so rich in secular architecture. There are, however, four palaces in Madras built in the 16th and 17th centuries. 'Lotus Mahal', a garden palace, was built in Vijayanagar about 1575 A.D. It was followed by the erection of a palace in the fort at Chandragiri by the Vijayanagar rulers. The lower portion of this "rectangular palace is of a solid construction of stone masonary but the upper storeys are of brick strengthened with a certain amount of wood work, finally all surfaces were coated with stuco." There is a palace at Madura built about 1645 A.D. (Plate XCII). The last group of palaces built about 1700 A.D. at Tanjore are much of the same style.[30]

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[27] Strange to say, writes Percy Brown, it was never occupied. No royal family has even lived within its precincts. Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

[28] These were similar to the one built at Agra Fort where the sewage and sullage dropped directly below into a drain carrying the refuse into the Yamuna.

[29] Man Mandir built by Maharaja Man Singh (1486-1516) a little earlier on the heights of Gwalior Fort seemed to have served "more a retreat for the royal ladies than a permanent residential Palace." Percy Brown describes it thus : "The main body of the building is in two storeys but on the eastern face against the retaining wall of the fort there are two additional ranges of underground apartments for use in the hot weather. The rooms of the uppermost floor have balconies overlooking the open courts below and above there are roof terraces in which to take the air while, around the whole are narrow screened passages for communications. The whole structure is unscientific." Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 129. See also Fergusson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 177.

Mansions and villas of the upper classes

No uniform pattern was followed by the nobility in the construction of their houses in various parts of the country. The climatic conditions in a particular region, the availability of materials and the taste of the builder were the main factors in the design of a building. A house, however, in a country like India which is in the tropics was considered to be beautiful, as Bernier remarks, "if it be conspicuous and if the situation be airy and exposed on all sides to the winds, especially to the northern winds."[31] The traveller observed that "many of their houses are built high and flat on the top from whence in the cool season of day they take in fresh air. They have no *chimneys* to their houses for they never use fire but to dress their meat. In their upper rooms they have doors and windows to let in the air but use no glass. An ideal house situated in the middle of a flowery garden would have court-yards, trees, basins of water, "small *ojects de eau* in the hall or at entrance and handsome sub-terraneous apartments" which were provided with large fans. It served as a retiring place during the summer noons.[32] Mandelslo's remark that "there is no house almost but hath its garden and tanques" shows the general popularity of the gardens.[33] The outer appearance of such a house might not be so impressive but inside there were all sorts of luxuries including tanks, choultries, private recesses for their women etc. During summer these tanks were filled with water "drawn by oxen from wells." The water thus drawn was sometimes raised through the device of a wheel in such great quantity that it rose like a fountain when passed through a lead pipe.[34] The roofs were generally kept flat so that the dweller might be able to enjoy the evening breeze. *Khas tattis* were also used during summer.

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[30] Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 132,

[31] Berneir, p. 247. In 1677 A.D. Aurangzeb put a ban on the construction of pucca houses by *mansibdars* above 400 without special permission. Sarkar, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, (Urdu) p. 100.

[32] *Ibid.*, p., 248.

[33] Mandelslo, p. 54 ; Edward Terry, *Early Travels*, p. 301.

Division of two wings

These houses had large enclosures in the middle of which were situated the dwelling apartments so that no one could approach directly the place where the women resided. The house had to be so constructed as to provide for two wings known as the *mardana* and the *zenana*. A drawing room where the noble received visitors and held court, a *khwabgah* or the bed-room, a kitchen, lavatories, etc. besides a courtyard[35] were the necessary requisites.[36] Quite frequently, however, there were 3 to 4 *diwans* or large rooms raised high from the ground for fresh air to come in. The climatic conditions also necessitated a terrace where the family could sleep during nights[37] The roofs of the buildings were kept flat for this purpose. A *barsati* or a spacious room was also built on the terrace where "the bed-stand is easily moved in case of rain, when the cold wind is felt at the break of day or when it is found necessary to guard against the light but penetrating dews" which, as Bernier notices, "frequently cause a numbness in the limbs and induce a species of paralysis."[38] The European travellers are full of praise for the houses of the rich which were "noble and elegant",[39] spacious and pleasant.[40] Nieuhoff, however, observed that their houses were not as high as similar buildings in Europe. The traveller noted that at the entrance of their houses whether of the rich or the poor were courtyards surrounded with high walls which were meant for the reception of the visitors.[41] Hindus, unlike Muhammadans, paid more attention to the outer look of their houses which were built of "stone and cemented with lime upto the first storey above which carpenter's work was to be seen with sculptures in relief in teak wood painted in various colours."[42]

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[34] Pelsaert *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.

[35] Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221.

[36] Mandelslo, p. 64.

[37] As Pelsaert says, "Their houses are noble and pleasant except a flat roof on which to enjoy the evening air." *Jahangir's India*, p. 66.

[38] Bernier, p. 247.

Merchant's houses at Surat

The houses of the merchants at Surat were fair and stately. Built of brick and lime, they were several storeys high. Stone being unavailable, timber imported from Daman was extensively used in their windows with *chicks* or lattices carved in wood. Externally they were purposely kept plain and simple to avoid the avaricious eyes of the Mughal Governor, but "were ornamented without displaying gold-embroidered tapestery." Mandelslo saw beautiful gardens and fair country houses in the suburbs of Surat.[43]

Houses in Kashmir

These houses were seldom 3 or 4 storeys high[44] except in Kashmir, where, as *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* points out, most of these houses were at least 5 storeys high,[45] each storey containing apartments, halls or galleries or towers.[46] *Khulasat*, which puts the number of storeys in Kashmir at four, elaborates : "On the ground floor are kept animals and furniture, the second storey is the residence, the third and fourth are used for keeping articles."[47] Due to frequent earthquakes, houses in Kashmir were built of wood.[48] Pelsaert praises the "elegant look" of these houses which were ventilated with handsome and artistic open work instead of windows or glass.[49] On the roof of these houses which were all made of wood were planted *tuiips* which presented a nice spectacle to look at in spring.[50] Pelsaert mentions that people grew grass or onions on the flat-roofed houses so that during the rainy season the "green roofs and groves, usually situated on the river side, make the city most beautiful on a distant view."[51] *Khulasat* also mentions floating houses in Kashmir.[52] Most of these houses possessed a garden and sometimes even a small lake which at a distance joined the main canal where they enjoyed boating.[53]

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[39] *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.

[40] Mandelslo, p. 64.

[41] Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221.

[42] "Travels of Pedro Godinho" (1683), *Calcutta Review*, Vol. XCIII (1891), p. 67.

[43] *Ibid.*, p, 67 ; Fryer (old), p. 92 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 225 ; Edward Terry in *Early Travels*, pp. 301-2 ; Ovington, p. 216 ; Thevenot (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 22 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 163 ; Hamilton, I, pp. 161-62 ; Thomas Herbert's *Voyages*, p. 31 ; Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 6 ; Mandelslo, p. 12.

[44] Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221.

Mansions at Agra

Bernier saw at Agra the mansions of nobles interspersed with "luxuriant and green foliage in the midst of which the lofty stone houses of the Banias or Hindu merchants have their appearance of old castles buried in forests."[54] Birbal's house at Fatehpur Sikri represents a "superb example of residential building remarkable for its balance and harmony of design." It was a two-storeyed building raised on a plinth, the first floor was reached by two stair-cases. The ground floor had a suite of 4 rooms, each with a flat ceiling. Tavernier was greatly impressed by the houses of the nobles at Agra which he regarded as "the biggest city in India."[55] Nicholas Withington, however, regarded Agra as inferior to Lahore.[56]

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[45] *Tawarikh-i-Rashidi*, trans. E. Denison Ross, p. 425. *Khulasat* writes four or more storeys. *Khulasat, India of Aurangzib* (Sarkar), p. 112. Thevenot says three storeys high. Thevenot, p. 82.

[46] *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, translation E. Denison Ross, p. 425.

[47] *Khulasat*, *India of Aurangzib* (Sarkar), p. 112.

[48] *Ain*, (Sarkar) III, p. 352.

[49] *Jahangir's India*, p. 34.

[50] *Khulasat*, *op. cit.* (Sarkar), p. 112.

[51] *Jahangir's India* p. 34.

[52] *Khulasat*, *op. cit.* (Sarkar), p. 70.

[53] Thevenot, p. 82.

[54] Bernier, p. 285.

Monserrate had nothing but admiration for the "well-built, lofty and handsomely decorated residences of the rich men at Delhi."[57] He particularly refers to the abundance of green trees.[58] *Khulasat* praises the "heart-ravishing" houses of the nobles at Delhi which had "perfect grace and happiness."[59]

Mansions at Delhi and Lahore

There were lofty and spacious houses of the upper classes at Delhi, Lahore and Masulipatam. They had balconies and folding windows. Some of them had a tank in the middle of the courtyard which served as a retreat during summer.[60] These mansions, to quote *Khulasat*, reposed in the midst of "extensive gardens or clusters of trees."[61]

In Malabar, the houses of the rich, as Bartolomeo noted, were built of teak wood and consisted of not more than two storeys. In front of the lower storey, there was a small hall which served as a verandah or parlour. The upper storey was used for study, as a bedroom or for any other private work.[62] He saw several houses which were 400 years old and had not suffered any decay.

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[55] Tavernier, p. 76, I, p. 86.

[56] Nicholas Withington in *Early Travels*, p. 244.

[57] Monserrate, pp. 97-98.

[58] *Ibid.*

[59] *Khulasat*, Extracts translated in Sarkar's *India of Aurangzib*, p. 5.

[60] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 174-75 ; Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 141 ; For Lahore see *Early Travels*, p. 243. "It was said to be one of the largest cities of the whole universe for it is xv miles in compasse and exceeded Constantinople itself in greatness." *Ibid.*

[61] *Khulasat* (Sarkar), *India of Aurangzib*, p. XXXVIII.

Verandah was a speciality of houses in Sind. Bocarro found 50,000 well-built houses in the 'Kingdom of Cande' (Sind).[63] In Cambay the houses of the well-to-do were built of brick and stone and had flat roofs with "ceilings of tiles and cisterns."[64] The houses of the rich in Gujarat were built of brick and lime on broad stone foundations. Most of the houses had secret passages for escape in an emergency.[65] Some among the wealthy people, having built vaults, covered their buildings with lime mortar.

Houses of the middle class

The houses of the traders, merchants and the petty umras were modest in their appearance as compared to those of the nobles. They lacked their elaborate carvings, embellishments and beautiful gardens. Some of them were built of brick, burnt tiles and lime,[66] others of clay and straw.[67] In the villages, the well-to-do zamindars had several huts grouped together. The thatched rooms were supported by long, handsome pillars of cane. The walls were covered with a fine white lime.[68] These houses were very airy and commodious. Some of them were two storeyed and had beautiful terrace roofs.[69] In Agra most of the houses were two or three storeys high during Jahangir's time.[70] The majority of the houses in Varanasi, according to Tavernier, were built of brick and cut-stone.[71] The houses of the merchants in Malabar were two-storeyed and could be had at 20 Crowns while those of the commoners cost 2 Crowns.[72]

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[62] Bartolomeo, *op. cit.*, pp. 155, 158.

[63] Bocarro's 'Description of Sind', translated and annotated by F. Achilles Meersman, *Journal of Sind Historical Society*, August, 1940, Vol. IV, p. 201. The title of his work is 'Livro das plantas de fortalezas cidades and paroacoes da Estado de India Oriental' composed in 1635 A.D.

[64] Della Valle, I, p. 67 ; Pieter Van Dan Brocke at Surat, J. I. H., Vol. X, 1931, p, 246.

[65] *Khulasat*, Sarkar, *India of Aurangzib*, p. 61 ; also see *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 246.

[66] Saletore, *Social Life in the Vijayanagar Empire*, Vol. II, p. 293.

[67] *Ain*, Jarrett (1891), Vol. II, p. 122.

[68] Bernier, p. 246.

Arrangement of the houses

If the building happened to be in the main street, the lower storey of it was fronted with awnings and similar expedients to form traders' booths. But in the quieter alleys of such towns as Bikaner, Jodhpur, Lashkar (Gwalior) and Ajmer, such dwellings, 2 or 3 storeys high, would have a flat roof enclosed with a balustrade or perforated parapet, thus converting it into a terrace for use in the hot weather. Outside on the ground floor was a platform approached by steps. It would serve as a *chabutara* or sitting-out place for the use of the master to conduct his business and entertain his friends. There was usually only one strong wooden doorway in the centre, for protection. The middle storey might consist of a wide and continuous balcony supported on clusters of carved brackets. The windows were screened with stone lattices. It enabled the occupant to see without being seen. Another feature was the eave or *chhajja*, above the cornice of each storey with its great width, its cast and shadow which helped to keep the entire building cool during summer.[73] In Gujarat and Kathiawar, the same general description held good except that in those parts wood took the place of stone. In Kashmir the face of the houses wore picturesque compositions of wood in which arcaded balconies were special features.

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[69] Rennell's *Memoir of a Map of Hindostan*, p. 58.

[70] *Tuzuk*, Rogers, I, p. 7 ; Latif, *Agra, Historical and Descriptive*, p. 24.

[71] Tavernier, p. 96.

[72] *History of Dutch East Indies*, p. 314 ; also see A. Sarada Raju, *Economic Conditions in Madars Presidency (1800-1850)*, University of Madras, 1941, p. 279.

[73] Percy Brown, *op. cit.*, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 133.

In Ahmedabad the houses were generally built of brick and mortar and the roofs tiled. Ferishta wrote about its 30 *mohallas*, each *mohalla* having a wall surrounding it. He thought it to be the "handsomest city in Hindostan."[74]

Huts of the poor

No traveller has a good word to say about the houses of the lower classes. These have generally been described as thatched huts, without any cellars and windows. Each hut had only one apartment. The addition of a second hut and a granary was considered as making a house a comfortable abode.[75] These huts had only a single opening for air, light and entrance. It was impossible to enter without stopping.[76] The floors of the houses were of pounded earth spread over with cowdung.[77] To keep them clean, pasting with cowdung was done afresh almost every day.[78]

The mud huts

Such huts could be easily built in a few days ; the mud walls, 6 or 7 ft. high, did not take much time to harden due to the intensity of the heat. Orme was misinformed when he wrote that these houses, constructed with bamboos and pack thread, and covered only with the mat of palm tree leaves, would last for 6 months.[79] In fact they lasted much longer, as Abul Fazl mentions.[80] These thatched cottages were, however, subject to frequent fires. Bernier refers to a fire in Delhi which burnt down 60,000 huts.[81] The traveller particularly observed that our houses and cities were crowded ; large families stayed in a single hut.[82] In their huts they had only a mat to sleep upon and a pit or hole in the ground to beat their rice in. They had only a pot or two for cooking purposes.[83]

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[74] See Thornton, *Gazetteer of India*, Vol. I, p. 28.

[75] Linschoten, I, p. 261. For houses in Narwar (Gwalior), Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 51 ; *Roe's Embassy*, p. 90 ; Masulipatam, Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 141 ; Patna, Purchas' *Description of India*, pp. 6, 10, and Hamilton, II, p. 22. For a thatched hut of *Sadhus* late 17th century, refer to Plate LX, Catalogue of the Indian Collection in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Part VI, Mughal Painting by Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.

[76] Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221 ; Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 100.

[77] *Storia*, III, p. 41 ; also see Orme's *Fragments*, pp. 407-8.

[78] *India in the 17th Century*, p. 451.

Building materials of the poor

Bamboo canes, branches of trees, ropes and grasses of diverse kinds constituted the main building materials of the houses of the common. Abul Fazl found the houses in Orissa made of reeds,[84] while bamboo was used in the construction of houses at Ajmer.[85] The houses at the latter place were tent-shaped.[86] Manucci's remark regarding the houses at Patna (Bihar) that they were thatched with leaves of palm tree finds corroboration from Tavernier.[87] During his travels from Varanasi to Patna, Ralph Fitch found that most of the houses of the poor were of "earth covered with straw."[88] Due to the frequent changes in the course of the river Jhelum, the people in Multan (West Punjab) had their houses built of wood and grass.[89] Tavernier was struck by the "miserable huts" of the poor at Dacca which were made of "bamboo with mud spread over them."[90] The bamboo houses in Bengal used to last for a very long time.[91] The houses in Khandesh looked a little better. They were made of earth like the houses in other parts of the country but were covered with varnished tiles. Many of them were surrounded by trees which made them look beautiful.[92] Most of the houses in Kashmir were made of wood. However, many people lived in large boats as in Bassein.[93] Tavernier, Thevenot and Careri have referred to the houses of the poor at Surat. Like those in Malabar, they were made of bamboo canes covered with branches and leaves of palm trees, the interstices being filled up with cowdung mixed with clay to "prevent those outside from seeing between the reeds what goes on inside."[94] The houses of the lower classes in Sind were made externally of poles covered with a mixture of straw and mud.[95] The houses of the working classes in the South were "nothing but huts covered with Cajan leaves." These were so low that a person could not stand upright in them. The houses in Vijayanagara were arranged according to occupation in long streets with many open spaces. They were usually of straw and mud but the wood of coconut was used wherever it was available, particularly in coastal areas.[96] The houses of the poor in Cochin were, according to a 17th century traveller, nothing but hovels. They could not even be called a booth.[97]

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[79] Orme's *Fragments*, p. 472.

[80] *Ain* (Jarrett), II (1891), p. 122 ; Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.

[81] Bernier, p. 246.

[82] Bocarro's account in *Journal of Sind Hist., Soc.*, Vol. IV, August 1940.

[83] Linschoten, Purchas' *Pilgrims*, X, p. 262.

[84] *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 138.

[85] *Ibid*, p. 273.

[86] *Ibid*.

[87] Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 100.

[88] Ralph Fitch, *Early Travels*, pp. 23-24.

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[89] *Khulasat* (Sarkar), *India of Aurangzib*, p. 79.

[90] Tavernier, *op. cit.*, I, p. 86.

[91] *Khulasat* (Sarkar), *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[92] Thevenot, p. 100.

[93] Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 34 ; Ralph Fitch, *Early Travels*, p. 30.

[94] For Surat see Sen, *Careri*, p. 163 ; Thevenot, p. 23 ; Tavernier (Ball), I, p. 6 ; for Malabar refer to Nieuhoff's *Voyages*, p. 221 ; Bartolomeo, p. 155 ; Padre Godinho (1663), *Calcutta Review*, Vol. XCIII (1891), p. 67.

[95] Bocarro's Description of Sind, *Journal of Sind Hist. Soc.*, Vol. IV, August, 1940.

[96] Saletore, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 295.

Love of trees

The foreigners praise the Indians for their love of trees which were planted all around their villages and towns. In fact from a distance their villages looked like forests or groves.[98] Every Hindu would have a *tulsi* plant in his house which was tended to reverently and worshipped.[99]

Use of cowdung

Pietro Della Valle noticed in A.D. 1623 a universal custom which escaped the attention of the previous travellers. "When we arriv'd at this Town (which he calls Tumbre) we found the pavements of the cottages were varnish'd over with cow-dung mix'd with water ; a custom of the Gentiles in the places they are wont to eat, as I have formerly observ'd. I took it for a superstitious Rite of Religion ; but I since better understand that it is us'd only for elegancy and ornament, because not using, or not knowing how to make, such strong and lasting pavements like ours, theres, being made sleightly of Earth and so easily spyl'd, therefore when they are minded to have them plain, smooth and firm, they smear the same over with cow-dung temper'd with water, in case it be not liquid (for if it be there needs no water), and plaining it either with their hands, or some other instrument, and so make it smooth, bright, strong and of a fine green colour, the cows whose dung they use never eating anything but Grass ; and it hath one convenience, that this polishing is presently made, is soon dry and endures walking, or anything else, to be done upon it ; and the Houses wherein we lodg'd we found were preparing thus at our coming, and presently dry enough for our use. Indeed this is a pretty Curiosity, and I intend to cause tryal to be made of it in Italy, and the rather because they say for certain that the Houses whose pavements are thus stercorated, are good against the Plague, which is no despicable advantage. Onely it hath this evil, that its handsomeness and politeness lasteth not, but requires frequent renovation, and he that would have it handsome must renew it every eight, or ten days ; yet, being a thing easier to be done and of so little charge, it matters not for a little trouble which every poor person knows how to dispatch. The Portugals use it in their Houses at Goa and other places of India ; and in brief, 'tis certain that it is no superstitious custom, but onely for neatness and ornament ; and therefore 'tis no wonder that the Genties use it often and perhaps every day, in places where they eat, which above all the rest are to be very neat."[100]

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[97] *India in the 17th Century*, p. 215.

[98] Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 246.

[99] Fryer (old), p. 199.

SECTION II

FURNITURE

General

Furniture, in the modern sense of the word, has never been very popular in India. It does not imply, however, that its various forms were not known to our ancestors. The references to *pitha*[101] (stool), *protha*[102] (a broad coach over which women lay down to sleep), and *talpa*[103] (a bed or a couch), in Vedic texts and to *khatta* (bedstead), and *pithamasana* (chair or stool) in the *Amarakosa*,[104] besides many others, may very well serve as examples. Even a cane-bottomed seat or *vetrasana* finds a reference in Hemachandra.[105] There is no denying the fact, however, that these articles including the *khatta* were, of course, never in common use and the Mughals did not bring about any radical change in this long-established custom.[106]

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[100] Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 296-97.

[101] Vaj Sam, XXX, 21. Also refer to *The Industrial Arts of India* by G. M. Birdwood, p. 203. For reference to chairs and tables during the reign of Chandra Gupta Maurya (322 B.C.), V. A. Smith's *Early History of India*, p. 128.

[102] *Rig Veda*, V. VII, 55, 8.

[103] *Ibid*, VII, 55, 8, A. V., V, 17, 12 ; XII, 2, 31, 41.

Chairs—superfluous and uncomfortable

The Indian mode of sitting[107] did not necessitate chairs which were rightly regarded in Mughal days as superfluous and uncomfortable.[108] Leaving aside even that there was no place for them in the royal darbar as all, including the highest dignitaries of the state, ambassadors from foreign lands and even princes of the blood royal except the privileged few, had to keep standing.[109] Fryer[110] and Pelsaert's[111] observations regarding the complete absence of chairs are rather exaggerated. The Governor of Surat, we are told, at once sent for chairs when Roe called on him.[112] The use of elbow chairs by the rich has been stressed upon by another seventeenth century traveller.[113] Abdur Razak, the Persian Ambassador, who visited Vijayanagar a little prior to our period, also testifies to the use of chairs and settees by courtesans of Vijayanagar.[114] Several contemporary paintings depict Mughal kings[115] and even their nobles[116] sitting on chairs having arms and high backs. The seats, sometimes cushioned, were always wider than those of today. The legs of the chairs were sometimes carved out and the feet were connected by wooden planks.[117] Some of

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[104] *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, pp. 18-19. Also see T. N. Mukharji, *Art Manufacturers of India*, p. 232, R. C. Majumdar (ed.), *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, p. 615. Also see I-tising's Record (Takakusa's English Translation, Oxford, 1896), Chapter XXII.

[105] *Ibid.*

[106] The houses of the merchants on the West Coast, however, were well furnished. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62, 273.

[107] Cross-legged or knees bent inwards. The latter posture was usually adopted by Muhammadans in the Mughal darbar. See Chester Beatty, *op. cit.*, Vols. I-III and *Storia*, III, p. 41.

[108] Particularly when sitting with their legs dangling down. Thomas's *Customs and Manners*, p. 75. Also see *Ain*, III (Sarkar), p. 324 and Pelsaert's *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.

[109] Studies in Indian Paintings, Plate No. 39, depicts an European Embassy in the Court of Shahjahan. Abdul Aziz, *Thrones, Chairs and Seats used by the Indian Mughals* p. 182 ; *Storia*, I, pp. 88 (middle) and 89. The notable exceptions were, Abdur-r-Rahim (Vide *Tuzuk*, 416 ; *Badshahnama*, I, 194), Prince Khurram (*Tuzuk*, 195, R & B, I, 395) and Dara Shukoh (*Badshahnama*, III, 108a). This unique privilege was not in recognition of one's position as an ambassador or royal prince, but was

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meant as a royal tribute to his personality and descent. Abdul Aziz, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

[110] Fryer (old), p. 200.

[111] Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67.

[112] *Roe's Embassy*, p. 65.

[113] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 456.

[114] Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, p. 268.

[115] A little prior to our period we see Timur sitting on an armed chair (Plate No. 44, p. 102 of *Studies in Indian Painting*) ; for other two pictures depicting Timur in a similar chair refer to No. 44 and the other unnumbered both in possession of Delhi Museum of Archaeology. For a painting of Akbar's time depicting a woman with a tall *chaghtai* cap sitting on a chair refer to Plate III, *Catalogue of Indian Collections*, Part VI, Mughal Paintings. Plate XLVII depicts a princess seated on a chair with water and lotuses in the foreground. In Stochoukine (*La Peinture Indienne*, Plate XXXI) we see Jahangir sitting on a jewelled chair. Aurangzeb is depicted sitting on a chair in *Storia*, II, Frontispiece. Plates LXII and LVI (*Catalogue of Indian Paintings*, Part VI, Mughal Paintings, A.D. 1712) depict Jahandar Shah on a beautiful chair.

[116] For Sadullah Khan, the Prime Minister of Shahjahan, sitting on a chair administering justice see Stochoukine, *La Peinture Indienne*, Pl. LV and for Fakhir Khan another of his nobles on a chair see Pl. XXXII (Binyon, *Court Painters*). Abdul Aziz, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

[117] Refer to the footnotes 115 and 116 above.

them got their chairs covered with ivory.[118] Couches usually made of precious wood[119] or even metals[120] were well cushioned with costly carpets and rugs. Monserrate writes : "Akbar generally sits with cross-legs upon a couch covered with scarlet rugs."[121] Sometimes made of wood, they had diamond-set handles with garlands of flowers on them.[122]

Furniture for sitting

Stools were used in those days. Usually covered with leather or cloth, they could be interwoven with cane also.[123] *Pidis* or seats also find reference in old Bengali literature.[124] Those made of suitable wood such as *kanthal* (yellow wood) and *mandar* (the coral trees) were articles of luxury.[125] *Mundas* of reed have also been mentioned by M. Ashraf in his *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*.[126]

Tables were not much in demand during Mughal days.[127] Hamilton hints at it : "They lack wooden dishes and tables but not so well as in China."[128] But tables were in use among the merchants on the West Coast.[129] Linschoten refers to the use of plantain leaves for making table cloths and napkins.[130] Sind leather was also employed to cover tables.[131]

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[118] For illustration of two chairs belonging to XVII and XVIII centuries refer to figure 137 of *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon* by Coomaraswamy.

[119] Several contemporary paintings depict these couches ; see, for example, Plate 58, Vol. III, Chester Beatty ; Also refer to *Maasir*, I, p. 64.

[120] Sometimes of gold. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 27.

[121] Monserrate's *Commentary*, p. 199.

[122] *Ibid.*

[123] Della Valle, pp. 245-46. Also see Capt. Cope, *A New History of the East Indies*, p. 37.

[124] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 300.

[125] *Ibid.*

[126] Ashraf, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

[127] The writer has come across at least one beautiful contemporary painting (Chester Beatty, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, Pl. 58) which depicts a nice little table with a single leg in the centre. Nuniz also refers to the use of a three-legged stool by Achyuta Raja of Vijayanagar. His dinner was served on this table made of gold. Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, pp. 282-83.

Royal thrones

Thrones have always served as the usual seat for the Indian kings.[132] Besides the imperial thrones in the darbar, it was customary to have one provided in every room of the palace. A nicely designed golden foot-stool was invariably placed beneath the throne.[133] Mughal Emperors spent large sums of money on design and construction of their golden thrones,[134] which were used like chairs. Abdul Aziz has described some of these thrones in chronological order in his monograph on "Thrones, Chairs and Seats used by the Indian Mughals."[135]

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[128] Hamilton, I, p. 126.

[129] Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62 ; Mandelslo, p. 27.

[130] Moreland, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

[131] Manrique, II, p. 239.

[132] Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon*, p. 169 ; Mukharji, *Art Manufactures of India*, pp. 231-32. Thrones are mentioned in *Rigveda*, the *Ramanaya* and *Mahabharata*. Birdwood names them as *rajapatra* and *rajasana* (*The Industrial Arts of India*, p. 204)

[133] Refer to Plate No. 31, Chester Beatty, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, fol. 201 for example. Also refer to *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 369.

[134] Refer to Abdul Aziz, *Thrones, Chairs and Seats of Indian Mughals*, pp. 183-87.

[135] For Babar's thrones Plate XXXIV (b) of Loan Exhibition of Antiquities, Delhi, 1911 ; Plate XIV of Percy Brown's *Indian Paintings under the Mughals* ; For Humayun's throne *Tarikh-i-Khandan-i-Timuriya* (Bankipur Library) facing page 158. For Akbar's Plate facing p. 164 of *Humayunnama* ; Plate XIV of Stochoukine's *La Peinture Indienne*, Plate XLVII (c) of Loan Exhibition, Delhi, Chester Beatty, Vol. II, Frontispiece, and Plates 6, 16, 17, 31, 65. For Jahangiri thrones, Percy Brown, Plate XLIV, Pl. LVI, No. 2 ;

Whenever the king visited any of his subjects some minor throne usually moved ahead of him.[136] Marble platforms were usually constructed in the courtyards and in the lawns of the royal palaces for seating purposes.[137]

Bedsteads

Khatta[138] or bedstead, the most common article of furniture in those days, was used by the rich[139] and the poor alike.[140] Foreign travellers rightly mention it as the only furniture available in the house of a poor man.[141] It was used as a couch to sit and recline upon during daytime and served the purpose of a cot at night.[142] These bedsteads, woven with cords[143] or braids of cotton or silk[144] according to the owner's

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Binyon, *Asiatic Art in the British Museum*, R & B, I, 168, R & B, II, 80. For Shahjahan, Plate XXV of *Indian Painting under the Mughals*, Plate 10 (c) Stanley Clarke, *Indian Drawings*; for Dara Shukoh, Pl. XXI, *Storia*, Vol. II; for Auragzeb's throne No. H. 169 (Delhi Museum of Archaeology), pp. 185-87 of Abdul Aziz's *Thrones, Chairs and Seats*. For three of the Mughal Emperors seated on richly decorated thrones refer to Chester Beatty, *op. cit.*, Plate 65, Vol. III.

[136] Abdul Aziz's *Thrones, Chairs and Seats*, p. 192.

[137] *Badshahnama*, I, ii, p. 238.

[138] So called on account of its being made of eight pieces of wood. *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, p. 120. It was also known as *Palankas*. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 271.

[139] Bernier, p. 353; Della Valle, pp. 245-46; Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62; *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 271.

[140] Mandelslo, p. 27; Hamilton, p. 126; *Jahangir's India*, p. 61; De Laet (Moreland, p. 273); Linschoten (quoted in Moreland, *op. cit.*, p. 273); Bartolomeo, p. 156.

[141] *Ibid.*

[142] *Storia*, III, p. 41. The *charpais* of the Waziris of Bannu possess a carved board at the head and at the right to be used as a back rest when desired. *Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition*, p. 119.

[143] Careri, (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 168.

[144] Ashraf, *Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan*, p. 273.

means, had their legs often painted or lacquered.[145] Gilt beds have also been mentioned by Bernier.[146] The aristocracy were very particular about their bedsteads which were lavishly ornamented with gold, silver,[147] or even with jewels and diamonds.[148] A bedstead of ivory inlaid with gold has also been mentioned.[149] Lacquered bedsteads used to be imported into Goa[150] as noted by Pyrard. Light and easily portable beds were also used when going out on journeys. Bernier refers to such a bed made of very strong but light cane.[151]

Paes, a Dutch traveller, describes a swing cot, or more exactly a cradle, that he saw in the royal palace at Vijayanagar thus : "On entering the corridor was a cot suspended in the air by silver chains ; the cot had feet made of bars of gold, so well made that they could not be better and the cross bars of the cot were covered with gold."[152] Ovington admires the Indian-made cradles as they were "much easier and more convenient than ours." Usually they were suspended in the air by means of strings tied at each end and fastened to a beam above. They would swing very softly.[153] Quilts of cotton or silk were spread over the floor of the swing.[154]

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[145] Bernier p. 359 ; Coomaraswamy, *Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon*, p. 169.

[146] Bernier, p. 359.

[147] Pelsaert, *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; *Travels of Nicolo Conti*, pp. 21-22 ; *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 298.

[148] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 298. Paes and Nuniz give a vivid description of the beds and cots used in the palace at Vijayanagar. While describing a bed-room the former writes : "It has a four-sided porch made of cane-work over which is a work of rubies and diamonds and all other kinds of precious stones and pearls and above all the porch are two pendants of gold, all the precious stone-work is in the heart-shape and interweaved between one and another is a twist of thick seed-pearl work, on the dome are pendants of the same. In this chamber was a bed which had feet similar to the porch, the cross bars covered with gold and there was on it a mattress of black satin ; it had all around it a railing of pearls a span wide, on it two cushions and no other covering." Nuniz writes about Achyuta Raya : "The bed-steads in which his wives sleep are covered and adorned with silver plates. Every wife has her bed in which she sleeps and that of the king is plated and lined and has all its legs of gold, its mattress of silk and its round bolster worked round the ends with large seed pearls. It has four pillows of the same pattern for the feet and has no other sheet than a silk cloth on top." Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, pp. 289-90.

[149] *Ibid.*, p. 290.

[150] Mentioned in Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62.

[151] Bernier, p. 353.

Bedding

The bedding of the poor was very scanty and consisted only of a sheet or two.[155] The bed-clothes[156] of the rich were costly and comprised mattresses, pillows and coverlets, which were sometimes made of silk[157] and embroidered ;[158] cotton was used for ordinary beds. A coverlet was usually doubled to serve as a mattress while on journeys.[159] Narwar (Gwalior) was famous for quilted coverlets which were usually embroidered.[160] Sind mattresses were much in demand in those days.[161] Rich Hindus preferred to use beautiful mats called *sitalpatis*[162] which were perhaps more exquisitely made than now. They had the reputation of being exceedingly cool when slept upon.[163] A costly blanket called *Indra Kambal*[164] and pillows filled with mustard seeds were regarded as articles of luxury.[165] Manrique also refers to the use of Sind leather for beds.[166] Quilts were also used in winter, particularly in northern India.[167] Manrique admires those of Sind for their excellent back stitches.[168] Fine quilts of Cambay were exported to Europe.[169]

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[152] Quoted in Saletore, *op. cit.*, II, p. 290. Also see *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280.

[153] Ovington, *A Voyage to Surat in the Year 1689*, ed. by H. S. Rawlinson, O. U. P. 1929, pp. 197-98.

[154] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 280.

[155] Mandelslo, p. 27 ; De Laet, p. 89 ; Pelsaert, p. 61 ; Hamilton, p. 126 ; also see Plate XVI, *Indian Drawings*.

[156] The bedding of the well-to-do according to old Bengali Literature (*Storia*, III, pp. 39-40) comprised of rough cloths, cotton *pachhras*, still used in Tipperah side, a bed-sheet and winter cloth, Khua fabrics, Bhutani blankets, silk fabrics, velvets, and red blankets. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 299.

[157] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 298 ; Ashraf, p. 273 ; Bernier, p. 353. Tattah coverlets were quite well-known. *A New History of East India*, p. 225.

[158] Refer to Plate XIV of *Catalogue af Indian Collections*, Part VI, Mughal Paintings.

[159] Bernier, p. 353.

Mosquito curtains

Mosquito curtains were also freely employed, particularly in Bengal, by the well-to-do who got them prepared of silken clothes.[170] *Chandua* curtains, their special form, finds reference in

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[160] Tavernier, I, p. 51.

[161] Manrique, II, p. 239. *Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition*, p. 448.

[162] *Khulasat* refers to it. Vide J. N. Sarkar, *India of Aurangzib*, p. 41 ; *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 271. *Sitalpati* mats are made at Mymensingh, Backergunj in Dacca and at Punniah in Bhagalpur. George C. M. Birdwood, *The Industrial Arts of India* (ed. 1880), p. 298. *Ganga-jali-patti* was another kind of mat. *Ibid*, p. 300.

[163] *Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition*, p. 448.

[164] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, pp. 271-72.

[165] *Ibid.*, p. 299.

[166] Manrique, II, p. 248.

[167] Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 168. His assertion that instead of quilts Indians used blankets, may be true for a part of the country. Also see Ovington, pp. 313-14.

[168] Manrique, II, p. 239. Also see *Storia*, III, p. 41.

[169] Cope Capt., *A New History of East Indies*, p. 225.

[170] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 299. P. K. Gode in his paper 'The Mosquito-Net in Egypt (B.C. 500) and the Mosquito-Curtain in India (Between B.C. 500 and A.D. 1800)' has proved the use of mosquito curtains in India from A.D.

Mymensingh ballads.[171] The use of the word चतुष्की both for a mosquito curtain and a fishing net in a verse in the *Sabdaratnasamanvaya* composed by King Shahaji of Tanjore (A.D. 1683-1711) testifies to the use of nets in mosquito curtains.[172] Achyuta Raya, king of Vijayanagar, had a mosquito curtain with a frame of silver.[173]

Mats usually made of straw[174] or the leaves of palm or coconut trees[175] were used by the poor to sit and lie upon.[176] These finely woven mats were spread over a place smeared over with cow-dung.[177] Muhammadans of Bengal, according to Mukundram, preferred to use reed mats.[178]

Carpets

Diwan khanahs or drawing rooms of the nobles were decorated with costly carpets[179] usually imported from Persia.[180]

1000. (*Bharatiya Vidya Journal.* Vol. VIII, No. 12, December, 1947, pp. 275-88). Also see Hobson-Jobson, p. 590, edition 1903.

[171] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 299.

[172] "चतुष्की मशकाहृर्य्या चतुष्की यष्टिकान्तरे ।
चतुष्की मत्स्यहार्यां स्यात् पुष्करिण्यन्तरेऽपिच ।।"
(*Sabdaratnasamanvaya*, G. O. Series, Baroda, 1932, p. 15.)

[173] Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, p. 289.

[174] Samuel Purchas' *India*, p. 188 ; Linschoten, I, p. 256 ; Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition, p. 440. For a Contemporary painting depicting a mat refer to Album of Jahangir, Frontispiece, Vol. III, Chester Beatty. For mats, see Birdwood, *Industrial Arts of India*, pp. 298-300. Mat manufacturing centres are at Midnapur (Bengal), Palghat (Malabar). Birdwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-300.

[175] *Storia*, III, p. 187.

[176] Samuel Purchas' *India*, pp. 96, 188. *Travels of Nicolo Conti* (*Travels in India in the 15th Century*), pp. 21-22 ; *Storia*, III, p. 42 ; Mandelslo, p. 85.

[177] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 392, 456 ; *Storia*, III, p. 41.

[178] *Bengal in the 16th Century*, p. 93.

[179] *Early Travels*, p. 311 ; Pelsaert's *Jahangir's India*, p. 67 ; Careri (Sen, *op. cit.*), p. 248.

[180] De Laet, p. 91 ; *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 296.

Carpets of Turkish leather were also used.[181] Akbar caused great improvements to be made in the carpet-weaving industry as a result of which "wonderful varieties and charming textures" were produced.[182] Terry considered Indian carpets to be as good as those made in Turkey or Persia.[183] Lahore and Kashmir[184] carpets were particularly famous. Pyrard admires the pile carpets of Bengal which they "weave with great skill."[185] But the carpets of Goshkan (Joshaqan, a town in Iraqi-i-Ajam), Khuzistan, Kirman and Sabzwar still retained their popularity and were imported in large numbers.[186]

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[181] Mandelslo (p. 28) saw such a carpet also at the residence of the Governor of Ahmedabad.

[182] The carpet in possession of Vincent Robinson and shown in the Indian Section of the South Kennsington Museum was made in the 16th century or early 17th century. It contains 3,500,000 knots in its entire surface or 400 knots to the square inch. Its pattern was so complicated that a change of the needle was required for every knot. T. N. Mukharji, *Art Manufacturers of India*, Calcutta, 1888. Pelsaert's *Jahangir's India*, p. 9. Also see Journal of Indian Arts and Industry, Vol. XI, April 1905. *Ars Islamica*, Vol. VII, pp. 93-94 (for a Persian garden carpet in Jaipur Museum), and Vol. VIII, pp. 121-212. "The Art of Carpet Making and a Survey of Persian Art" by Von Kurt Erdmann ; "On the Origin of the Persian Carpet Pattern" by Ernst Cohn-Wiener, *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XI, No. 4, Oct. 1937. H. Hendley, Asian Carpets, XVI, XVII century designs from Jaipur palaces, London, 1905 ; Handbook of the Jeypore Courts by H. Hendley, Calcutta, 1886, and Martin's "A History of Oriental Carpets before 1800", Vienna, 1908.

[183] *Early Travels* by Foster, p. 308.

[184] Plate No. 57 of *Indian Art at Delhi* (1903) shows two wonderful carpets believed to have been made in Kashmir about three hundred years ago. The carpets are preserved in the Asar Mahal, an old palace in Bijapur. An old manuscript *Haft Kursi-i-Padshahan* gives the date of their arrival from Kashmir in the year A.H. 1067 (1657 A.D.). *Indian Arts at Delhi*, p. 432. Some of the carpets used to cost hundred rupees a yard. *Maasir*, I, p. 715. For a Bijapuri *Jainamaz* of the same period refer to *ibid.*, p. 433 ; *Ain*, I (Bloch) 1939, p. 57. Agra, Fatehpur and Lahore were the main carpet weaving centres. Banaras too was a well-known centre. John Marshall writes : "They have excellent carpets (rugs) of 100 rupees each." *John Marshall in India*, p. 170. For present day centres see Birdwood, *Industrial Arts of India*, pp. 294-98.

Rugs and spreads

Gilims (or rugs) and *takya namdas* (or woollen coverlets) were in great demand among the nobles who had them imported from Kabul and Persia.[187] India-made *kalims* were equally handsome and durable; they were surprisingly cheap.[188] Srinagar and Masulipatam[189] were particularly famous for their fabrics, fine closely woven and beautifully designed rugs.[190] The Indian Hunting Rug of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts is one of the best carpets now extant in the world. It was manufactured in A.D. 1640.[191]

Jajams, *shatrinjis* and *baluchis* were sometimes spread over the mattresses.[192] In the drawing room of the Governor of

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[185] Pyrard, I, p. 328.

[186] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 57. Pyrard writes : "From Ormus to Goa came carpets the most exquisite and the best made in the world." Pyrard, II, pp. 239-40.

[187] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 57. For Persian rugs, see Churchill Mary, *The Oriental Rug Book*, pp. 172-205, 102-160.

[188] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 57. Abul Fazl relates that a single *gilim* 20 gaz 7 tassujes long and 6 gaz 11½ tassujes broad would cost Rs. 1810, though its estimated price by the experts would not be less than Rs. 2715. For Indian rugs see : Churchill Mary, *The Oriental Rug Book*, pp. 228, 240 ; and Hawley A. Walter, *Oriental Rugs*, pp. 253-76.

[189] *Catalogue of Delhi Art Exhibition*, p. 440.

[190] Amritsar, Agra, Lahore and Multan were also rug manufacturing centres. Walter, *Oriental Rugs*, p. 256. The well-known carpet now in possession of the Girdler's Company of London, was manufactured at Lahore in 1634. *Ibid.*

[191] Eight feet three inches long and five feet three inches wide, it contains about three hundred and sixty knots to the square inch. It depicts a hunting scene and its predominant colour is red. For details refer to Walter, *Oriental Rugs*, pp. 335-36.

[192] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 57.

Dacca, Fryer saw the floor spread over with a soft bed over which was laid "a fine white Calicut, the pedestals were massy silver."[193] Big cylindrical cushions were a part of the furniture and no drawing room could be considered as complete without them.[194] Whether on the throne, in the chair or even on the carpetted floor, cushions were there to support one's back and even sides if necessary.[195] Della Valle describes the drawing room in the provincial palace at Ikkeri. The king, he writes, sat upon a little quilt having at his back two great cushions of fine white silk. Curtains were also used to decorate the rooms.[196] Some of them carried pictures of men, houses and scenery.[197] Gujarati[198] and Banarsi curtains were particularly liked. The latter were embroidered with silk.[199] Sind had a reputation for leather hangings.[200] The king and the nobles used to import costly tapestry hangings from abroad.[201] Petermundy gives a fairly accurate description of the *khas tatties* which were used in summer,[202] and helped to keep the room cool.

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[193] Fryer (old), p. 131.

[194] *Ibid.* ; Bernier, p. 248 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, pp. 456 and 280 ; *The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon* by Ananda Coomaraswamy, London, 1913, p. 169 ; Ovington, pp. 313-14.

[195] Bernier, p. 248 ; Fryer (old), p. 200. Mughal nobles have been depicted popped up by large cushions in innumerable contemporary paintings for which refer to Chester Beatty's Vols. I-III ; Percy Brown's Plates XV, XXVII of *Catalogue of Indian Collections*, Part VI, Mughal Paintings ; *Studies in Indian Paintings* ; Plate No. 39 ; *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 456.

[196] Della Valle, II, pp. 250-52 quoted in Saletore's *Social and Political Life in the Vijayanagar Empire* (1346-1646 A.D.), Vol. II, p. 292.

[197] There is a painting on stuff in possession of Bedford College for Women, London, which was probably used as a temporary decoration in the King's Camp while on expedition. It dates back to the Mughal period, A.D. 1600-1620. For details refer to 'A New Mughal Painting on Stuff' by Basil Gray in *Ars Islamica*, Vol. IV, pp. 459-60. *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi*, vide f. 10-11 quoted in Ashraf, *op. cit.*, p. 273. For curtains refer to the various darbar paintings of the period.

[198] Gul, 18, 20-23 quoted in Ashraf, *op. cit.*, 273. The house of a noble called Khalifa where Gulbadan was received at Koil (Aligarh) by the Mughal Emperor was decorated with Gujarati curtains. *Ibid.*

[199] William Finch in Purchas, IV, p. 66.

Drawing room of a noble

Bernier's description of the *diwan khanah* of a noble is quite informative.[203] The gilt ceiling of the drawing room as well as the walls were beautifully painted.[204] The floor,[205] covered with a carpet usually four inches in thickness, had spread over it a white cloth in summer and a silk carpet in winter. Rugs, too, were used to enhance its beauty.[206] One or two mattresses with "fine coverings quilted in the form of flowers and ornamented with delicate silk embroidery interspersed with gold and silver" were also laid at some conspicuous corner where distinguished visitors were accommodated. There was a big pillow of brocade at each of these mattresses while many more of velvet or flowered satin were placed round the room. Beautiful porcelain vases and flower pots decorated the several well-cut and well-proportioned niches at the sides of the room. Chinaware was also used for decorative purposes in Mughal interiors.[207] Jahangir also refers to the use of Chinese porcelain in the *Tuzuk*. Sir Thomas Roe, who was conscious of its growing popularity,[208] relates how a Dutch Ambassador brought a nice present of Chinaware "sanders, parrots and cloves" for the Emperor.[209] Barbosa writes about the Muhammadan merchants of Reynel[210] that in their "well kept and well furnished houses they have many shelves all round the front room which are filled with fair and rich porcelain of new styles."[211]

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[200] Manrique, II, p. 239.

[201] *East India Company Records*, Vol. IV, p. 286. Sometimes it would cost 18 shillings per stitch. *Ibid.*

[202] Petermundy, II, p. 191 ; Bernier, p. 247 ; *Maasir*, I, p. 602.

[203] Bernier, pp. 247-48.

[204] Or plastered with fine white lime. *Early Travels*, p. 311. Also refer to "The Annual Relation of Father Fernao Guerreiro," J. P. H. S., Vol. VII, pp. 58-59.

[205] Usually paved with stone or else made with lime sand. *Early Travels*, p. 311.

[206] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 297.

[207] Abdul Aziz, *The Imperial Treasury of the Great Mughals*, J. I. H., Vol. XIV, 1935, p. 67.

Fans

Fans have been in use in India from time immemorial.[212] During its long history the fan has been made of palm-leaf, ivory, silver filigree, as well as of vellum, silk, tulle, lace, kid, chicken skin, paper and of a score of other materials.[213] The king of Vijayanagar sent for a fan called '*khatta*' for the use of Abdur Razzak, the traveller who visited the court in 1443 A.D.[214] During Mughal days, however, the common people used fans made from the leaves of the palm and coconut trees.[215] But the rich had broad fans, made of stiff leather,[216] or even of ivory.[217] Ovington refers to the use of '*murchals*' or fans of peacock feather and leather which were four to five feet long. *Padumavat* refers to the use of fly-whisks (*chowries*) by the well-to-do.[218] The Emperors and the nobles must have used diamond studded fans fitted with golden handles. We find a reference to a similar fan called '*Lakeer Biyani*' in old Bengali literature.[219] It has been described thus : "It was nicely made, of round shape resembling the moon. Its handle was made of gold. Even the wind god was afraid of it and bowed to its will at its very sight. There were ornamentation of gold on the fan and golden lotuses all around it...The thread that was used in the fan was golden. The fan was a valuable one and was full of pictorial decorations."[220]

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[208] *Roe's Embassy*, pp. 445, 459.

[209] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

[210] Rander near Surat.

[211] Barbosa, trans. Dames, I, pp. 147-48.

[212] *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, pp. 125-26. "The daughter of king Nila," a famous Sanskrit poem tells us, "was the first who fanned the sacred fire with a decorated palm-leaf." Its objects are to relieve "the effects of heat, sweating, thirst, fainting and excess of fatigue." *Susruta Samhita*, IV, xx, iv, 82.

[213] *Some Aspects of Indian Civilization*, pp. 125-26. Sometimes they were made of mica. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 290.

[214] Major, R. H., *India in the 15th Century*, p. 31. According to Nuniz, the greatest honour which the Raja of Vijayanagar could confer on a noble consisted of two fans ornamented with gold and precious stones made of the white tails of certain cows, and bracelets. Mahalingham, *Administration and Social Life under Vijayanagar*, p. 277.

Swinging fans

There is also a reference to the use of swinging fans in the houses of the rich. Usually made of linen they could be pulled by means of a string from outside.[221]

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[215] Orme's *Fragments*, p. 471 ; *Storia* III, p. 187. Also see Petermundy, II, p. 191.

[216] *Early Travels*, p. 313.

[217] An ivory fan probably of the 17th century is in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, and is referred to in the *Burlington Magazine*, LXXV (1949), 64. pl. I. C. *Ars Islamica*, Vol. IX, Parts 1-2, p. 94, f.n. 7.

[218] *Padumavat* (Hindi), p. 269. *Ramayana of Tulsidas* (Growse), p. 171. These were usually made of wild oxtail hair, peacock feathers or grass roots

[219] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 292. Other fans mentioned are *Danda Pakha*, *Aber Pakha*. *Ibid.*, p. 289.

[220] *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 292. For a painting depicting a big round fan of 12th century see "An Indian Prince", *Illustrated Weekly of India*, p. 35, July 20, 1952.

[221] Petermundy, II, p. 191. The early swinging fans consisted of "a large frame of wood covered with cloth or painted paper."

Royal furnishings on tours

Tents, marquees and wooden partitions may also be included in the royal furnishings which usually accompanied kings on tour.[222] Eleven types of such camps, viz., *bargah* with two door poles, *chubin rawati* raised on ten pillars having one and two doors, *do-ashiyana manzil* or house of two storeys raised upon 18 pillars, *zaminbos*, a tent made of various forms, the *ajaibi* consisting of nine awnings on four pillars, the *mandal* composed of five awnings joined together, *ath-khamba*, consisting of seventeen awnings, *khargah*,[223] a folding tent made in various ways, the *shamiana*[224] with awnings made of various sizes and *saraparda* made of carpetting are described in detail in the *Ain* by Abul Fazl.[225] *Gulalbar*, which may also be added, was the grandest of them all, never occupying an area of less than one hundred square yards.[226] *Gulalbar* was a wooden screen with its parts joined together with leather straps so that it could be folded when necessary.[227] *Qalandari*, a covering made of waxed cloth or any other lighter material, was also used to afford protection from the rain and sun.[228] Even the poor carried umbrellas sometimes made of leaves.[229] Manrique evaluates the total cost of the rugs, carpets, wall hangings and tents in the Imperial palace, pavillion etc. to be Rs. 9,925,449 (Rupees nine million, nine hundred and twentyfive thousand and four hundred and fortynine).[230]

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[222] For the Encampment on 'Journeys' see Ain 16 of *Ain-i-Akbari*, I (1939), pp. 47-49.

[223] Bernier (p. 359) writes as *Karguais*.

[224] Called as *Chandoas* (canopies) in Bengal. *Aspects of Bengali Society*, p. 296.

[225] For details refer to *Ain*, I (1939), pp. 55-57. For illustrations see Plates X and XI, p. 54.

[226] *Ain*, I (1939), p. 47.

[227] *Ibid.*, p. 57.

[228] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[229] Petermundy, II, p. 126.

[230] Manrique, II, p. 248.

Cabinets, chests etc.

Cabinets, chests, boxes, etc. were also to be found in the houses of the merchants on the West Coast.[231] Cabinets manufactured at Surat were said to be the best in the world.[232] Tattah had a reputation of making fine cabinets, usually inlaid with ivory.[233] Paes, a traveller, saw a room in the palace of Vijayanagar decorated with ivory carvings of lotus, roses and other flowers.[234]

Utensils

Strictly speaking, utensils do not form part of the furniture. But European travellers of our period include them in that list.[235] The poor among Muhammadans could only afford a few earthen wares[236] while Hindus had them made of brass or copper.[237] A "few flat dishes of copper or brass, drinking vessel with a spout, a pot kettle in which they boil their rice, a *villacea*, or round lamp of iron or brass fastened to a chain by which it can be suspended in the middle of the hut" and a wooden mortar were, according to an 18th century traveller, their only vessels.[238] Golden and silver vessels were used by the kings and the nobles.[239] Bengal was reputed for black and red pottery which was made, according to Pyrard, like the finest and most delicate terresigillee."[240] Manucci also refers to baskets made from branches of palm or coconut trees.[241]

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[231] Mandelslo, p. 27 ; Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, pp. 161-62.

[232] Capt. Cope, *A New History of East Indies*, p. 246.

[233] *Ibid.*, p. 225. There are two ivory caskets (about 1543) in the Residenz Museum, Munich and two ivory caskets and an ivory fan in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. The first dates from the second half of the 17th century vide *Burlington Magazine* LXIX (1936), 275 Pl. 3. The second Vienna casket probably dates from the 17th century. *Burlington Magazine* LXXV (1939), 64 Pl. 1A. An ivory casket in British Museum, early 17th century, South India etc. *Ars Islamica*, Vol. IX p. 94, f.n. 7.

[234] A. K. Commaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art* (London, 1927), p. 123.

[235] De Laet, p. 89 ; Pelsaert, p. 61 ; Bartolomeo, p. 156.

[236] Pelsaert, p. 61 ; De Laet, p. 89.

[237] Bartolomeo, pp. 156 and 159. Cups, spoons and dishes of the Malabaris were usually made of coconuts. *Travels in India in the 15th Century*, p. 221. Also see Mandelslo, pp. 64 and 85.

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[238] *Ibid.* ; Mandelslo, p. 64.

[239] De Laet, p. 91 ; Pelsaert, p. 67 ; *Storia*, II, p. 53 ; Mandelslo, p. 64.

[240] Pyrard, I, p. 329.

[241] *Storia*, III, p. 187.

CHAPTER V

Mode of Travelling and Conveyances

SECTION I

MEANS OF TRANSPORT

General

Though travelling was recommended by the learned of the age as a source of profit and a means of success, it was not much indulged in during Mughal times. Except for certain great highways, the permanent bridges over even the smaller rivers were rare.[1] It was reported to the East India Company in 1666 by their agents in India that "there were no better roads or mending of highways, but the first cart that travail must cut them anew, with their wheels, that makes it very tedious and troublesome travelling in the first of the year."[2] There were few efforts by the Mughal emperors to improve the condition of the roads. Sher Shah Sur was, however, an exception.[3] It was neither safe to travel without a proper escort as the highways swarmed with robbers and thieves.[4] Along the way there was scarcity of provisions and goods for both men and cattle and officials made the conditions still worse by demanding illegal gratification. Ordinary people, merchants and travellers preferred to accompany a carvan which, to quote a contemporary, was "a great multitude of people, travelling together on the way with camels, horses, mules, asses, etc. on which they carry their merchandise from one place to another."[5] Thousands and thousands of people would join the king's entourage whenever he moved out. And as a writer says : "Akbar's court, even when quartered in a city, was a camp or his camp was a travelling city."[6]

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[1] Rennel , *Memoir of a Map of Hindostan or The Mogul Empire*, London, 1788, p. 255. For important routes see Foster, *Early Travels*, p. 53 ; Purchas, *His Pilgrims*, Vol. X, pp. 172-81.

[2] Foster, *English Factories in India (1665-67)*, p. 570. Also see Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections*, edited Smith, 1915, p. 301. As late as 1824 Bishop Heber wrote about the miserable condition of the roads in Upper India. "There are no roads at all and the tracks which we follow are often such as to require care even on horseback."

Means of transport

Modern technical devices being unknown, means of transport in those days were confined to human carriers, beasts of burden, and wheeled traffic on land and boats on rivers and small sailing ships in the coastal seas. It took months and sometimes even years to traverse long distances. India's transport, however, compared favourably with the contemporary world, and there is some truth in Tavernier's observation that the "manner of travelling in India is more commodious than anything that has been invented for ease in France or Italy."[7]

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[3] For Sher Shah see T. A., p. 232, Badauni, I, p. 472, E & D, Vol. IV, p. 417 ; for Akbar's measures to build bridges refer to Smith, *Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 413.

[4] *Roe's Embassy*, 1899, p. 298 ; Tavernier, I, Chapt. III, p. 29 ; Foster, *Early Travels*, p. 314 ; W. Foster ; *English Factories (1646-80)*, p. 193.

[5] Foster, *Early Travels*, p. 260.

[6] Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 357.

[7] Tavernier, I, p. 28.

Oxen

The ox was the conveyance of the poor in villages and even in towns. "They ascended the ox," remarks Ovington, "with equal ease as we do our horses."[8] Instead of saddles, however, they put on a soft cushion and, with the strings of the reins passed through the nostrils of the animal in their hands, "travelled longer and shorter journeys at a good, round, easy rate."[9] Terry and Thevenot both confirm that some of them would go "as fast as a horse" and covered 20 miles a day.[10] The bullocks of Vijayanagar were known for their 'commodious pace'[11] and people rode on them with panels, girts and bridles.[12] It was the practice to shoe the oxen especially when they were to cover long distances.[13] They put a thick scarf around their necks and a collar of leather a little above, before they were yoked to the wagons.[14]

Bullock-cart

Horses, ponies, mules and even donkeys were used for riding purposes. In sandy places like Rajasthan and Sind camels were employed to cover distances. The traditional *bail-ghari* or the bullock-drawn cart was much more in use then. It carried passengers as well as luggage. Its structure and shape has not much changed during all these centuries. Drawn by 2 or even 3 oxen, it could cover 20 miles a day.[15]

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[8] Ovington, p. 254 ; *Early Travels*, p. 311.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Early Travels*, p. 311 ; Sen, *Travels of Thevenot and Careri*, p. 73.

[11] Caesar Frederick, quoted by T. V. Mahalingham, *Economic Life in the Vijayanagar Empire*, p. 153.

[12] Purchas, *His Pilgrims*, X, p. 98.

[13] Thevenot, edition 1681, Chapt. xxix.

[14] Tavernier, p. 29.

[15] De Laet, p. 83.

These carts were covered completely when ladies travelled.[16] Manrique travelled in a similar cart from Agra to Patna. They could be had on hire.[17]

Chariots

Samuel Purchas saw many fine carts in the country of the Mughal, gilded and covered with silk and fine cloth.[18] In Vijayanagar, it appears, carts were not used on a large scale owing to the bad conditions of the roads.[19] Thevenot refers to the use of chariots which were flat and even, having a border four fingers broad with pillars all round. The number of the pillars depended upon the taste of the owner but normally it did not exceed eight. It had 2 wheels each having 8 spokes 4 or 5 fingers thick. Those who could afford it covered the wooden floor of the chariot with a nice carpet, and "thongs of leather were interwoven from pillar to pillar to keep one from falling out." Some of the rich had their chariots surrounded with "ballisters of ivory." They were covered like the rooms of a house, their windows adorned with gilded leather or silk hangings, their mattresses made of silk quilts. Cushions were also used. Even a beautiful canopy was used sometimes as a protection against the rays of the sun.[20]

White oxen[21] were in great demand and were used by the nobles to draw their carriages.[22] To make them look more beautiful and impressive, they would "deck the ends of their horns with sheaths of copper and even clothe them."[23]

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[16] Terry in *Early Travels* by Foster, p. 312.

[17] Manrique, II (1629-43), p. 145.

[18] Samuel Purchas' *Description of India 250 Years Ago*, pp. 78-79; also for Gujarat, *Ain* II (Jarrett), p. 240.

[19] T. V. Mahalingham, *Life in the Vijayanagar Empire*, p. 153.

[20] Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[21] Each ox, according to Thevenot, cost about 200 crowns. Thevenot (Edition 1681), Chapt. XXIX.

[22] Mandelslo, III, p. 122.

[23] Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 73 ; Mandelslo, III, p. 65. For a beautiful contemporary painting of a 'Bullock Chariot' by Abul

These oxen were well fed and looked like elephants.[24] Some of the ordinary oxen were also very strong and would cover 12-15 leagues a day. They could travel for about 2 months at this speed.[25] The hire of such a coach was a rupee per day.[26] Thevenot found these chariots very comfortable. The finest chariots were built at Tattah.[27] Akbar preferred to drive in a two-horse chariot "wherein he would sit cross-legged upon a couch covered with scarlet rugs."[28] Among the presents sent by the East India Company to Jahangir, there was an English coach which created some sensation at the court and was used as a model by local craftsmen.[29] Jahangir presented it to Nurjahan. Its English lining was taken off and the coach was covered with gold, velvet and decorations.[30]

Horses, mules, and ponies served a quicker transport.[31] The poor rode on donkeys too.[32] In sandy parts like Rajasthan and Sind camels were used.[33] The swiftest camels came from Ajmer.[34] The *jammaza* breed was considered to be

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Hasan Nadiruz Zaman, the greatest painter of Jahangir's time refer to Shanti Swarup, *The Arts and Crafts of India and Pakistan*, Taraporevala 1957, facing page 14.

[24] *History of East Indies*, Vol. I, pp. 288-89.

[25] Tavernier, Chapt. III, p. 29.

[26] From Surat to Agra was 40 days journey and would cost about Rs. 40 to Rs. 45. Tavernier, Chapt. III, p. 29.

[27] Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

[28] J. S. Hoyland, *The Commentary of Father Monserrate S. J. on the Journey to the Court of Akbar*, p. 199.

[29] *Roe's Embassy*, edited by Hakluyt Society (1899), p. 6.

[30] S. M. Latif, *Agra, Historical and Descriptive*, p. 28.

[31] Mandelslo, p. 65.

[32] For a drawing showing a woman riding on an ass refer to Petermundy, II, p. 192. The ass is adorned with a "collar of cocker (coche shell) bells almost as big as hen's eggs, a frontlet of netting work and beads, their horns tipte with brass, etc." *Ibid.*

[33] *Roe's Embassy*, p. 298.

[34] Petermundy, II, pp. 245, 291.

the best. It was followed closely by *lok*.[35] These varieties surpassed even those imported from Iran and Turan.[36] The ordinary kind came from Jodhpur, Nagor, Bikanir, Jaisalmir, Bhatinda, Bhatnir and Gujarat. The *Ain* describes in detail the trappings. The poorer sort had the barest possible, a *mahar kathi*[37] (saddle), an *afsar* (head stall), a *dum-afsar* (crupper), etc. The rich had *kuchi* (saddle cloth), a *qatarchi*, a *sarbachi* (a sort of quilt), a *tang* (a girth), a *sartang* (a head strap), a *shehband*, (a loin strap), a *jalajil* (a breast rope adorned with shells or bells), a *gardaband* (a neck strap), three *chadars* (or coverings) made of broadcloth or variegated canvas or wax cloth. Besides these there were jewels, trimmings, silk and various other articles to adorn.[38]

Elephants

Elephants with beautiful *howdahs* were quite often used as a conveyance by kings and nobles.[39] Princesses would also move about on elephants. Bernier refers to Roshan Ara Begam's trips seated in a golden *howdah* on a Pegu elephant.[40] The best elephants came from Pannah.[41] Elephants were also found in the Subah of Agra, forests of Bayawan and Narwar, Subah of Allahabad, in the confines of Pannah, Ghora, Ratanpur, Nandanpur, Sirguja and Bastar, in the Subah of Malwa, in Hindiyah, Uchhod, Chanderi, Santwas, Bijagarh, Raisin, Hoshangabad, Garha, Haryagarh in Bihar, in Rohtas and Jharkhand, and in Bengal, Orissa and Gurgaon. It was perhaps during the reign of Shahjahan that white elephants from Pegu were first imported.[42] During Akbar's time there were 101 elephants in the royal stables reserved for the king's use. They were known as *khas* elephants. Whenever the king mounted on an elephant, it was customary for him to grant to the *mahavat* a sum equal to his one month's wages.[43] Of the many articles prescribed by the *Ain* as the harness of the elephants, the important ones were *dharna*, a large chain of iron, gold or silver, *loh langar*, a long chain which prevented the elephant from running, *gadela*, a cushion, a *chaurasi*, a number of bells attached to a piece of broadcloth tied before and behind with string passed through it, *pitkachh*, chains fastened over the elephant's sides for beauty, *qutas* (the tail of the Tibetan Yak), about sixty or more or less attached to the tusk, the forehead, the throat and the neck for ornamentation, and the *tayya*, fine iron plates, each a span long and 4 fingers broad, fastened to each other by rings. *Gaj-jhamp* was a covering put as an ornament above the *pakhar*. It was made of three folds of canvas, put together and sewn, broad ribbons being attached to the outside. *Megh dambar*, an awning to shade the elephant driver, was invented by Akbar. The *ranpiyal* was a fillet for the forehead made of brocade or similar stuffs, from the hem of which nice ribbons and *qutas* hung down. The *gateli* which consisted of four links joined together with 3 above them and 2 others over the latter was attached to the feet of the elephant. Its sound was very effective. *Pay ranjan* consisted of several bells similarly arranged.[44]

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[35] *Ain* I, (1939), p. 151.

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] Petermundy, II (p. 190) has *kojavas* (camel pannier) covered with red.

[38] *Ain*, I, pp. 152-53.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 138 ; also see Mandelslo, III, p. 65.

[40] Ranking's *Historical Researches*, p. 286 ; for the use of elephants in state processions refer to H. H. Das, *Norris' Embassy to Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 1959, p. 152.

[41] *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 129. The price of an elephant varied from rupees one lakh to one hundred rupees. *Ibid.*, p. 124-25.

Mules

Mules were used particularly for travelling on uneven ground. According to the *Ain*, it possessed the "strength of a horse and the patience of an ass and though it has not the intelligence of the former, it has not the stupidity of the latter." It never forgot the road which it had once travelled. Akbar encouraged its breed. The best mules in the country came from *Pakhali* (a little town north of Rawalpindi) and its neighbourhood.[45] They were also imported from Iraq-i-Arab and Iraq-i-Ajam and cost about Rs. 1,000 per head. For the poor, a saddle and a rope or a chain sufficed as the equipment for riding a mule. The rich, however, had a large number of accessories which included a *palan* (pack saddle), a *shaltang* (shawl strap), *palastang* (blanket strap), a horsehair saddle, a *sardoz* (common head stall), a *magasran* (to drive away flies), a curry comb, a hair glove etc.[46]

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[42] *Padshahnama*, I, p. 967.

[43] *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

[44] *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-36.

Horses

Horses were preferred to other beasts for their swiftness, impressive look and comfortable ride. Horses were also used for drawing carriages. Special attention was paid to their proper breed. Horses were imported from Iraq-i-Arab, Iraq-i-Ajam, Turkey, Turkestan, Badakhshan, Shirwan, Qirgluz, Tibet, Kashmir and other countries. Panjabi horses called *Sanjui* (or *Satuji*) resembled Iraqi horses. Horses of Pati Haibatpur, Bajwaral, Tihara (in the Subah of Agra), Mewar and Ajmer were much sought after. *Gut* horses of northern mountains and *tanghan* (or *taghan*) horses of Kuch Behar were known for their strength.[47] Kashmir horses were small, strong and capable of travelling difficult tracts. Bengalis rarely took to horse riding.[48]

The trappings of horses included an *artak* or horse quilt, a *yalposh* (or covering for the mane), a woollen towel, the saddle cloth, a *magasran* (a horse-tail fan to drive away flies), a *nukhta* and *qayza* (the bit) etc.[49]

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[45] *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

[46] *Ibid*, pp. 161-62.

[47] *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

[48] Abul Fazl quoted by T. K. Raychaudhari, *Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir*, 1953, pp. 192-93 ; *Ain*, Jarrett, II, p. 350.

Palanquins

The nobles and the wealthy, however, preferred to travel in palanquins which were very comfortable. Several European travellers have described in detail these conveyances which were in fact box-litters with a pole or two projecting before and behind which were borne on the shoulders of 4 or 6 men.[50] But when the journey was long, there were relays of bearers to take over.[51] These palanquins were covered all over with cloth. In case of rain, wax cloth was placed all over the palanquin.[52] There were several types of these conveyances. *Doli* and *dola* were ordinary types of palanquins. The former was especially hired for women to cover short distances.[53] It is still customary to carry home the bride in a *doli* which is covered with a red cloth.[54] They were covered with a rich cloth known as *Pater Dola* in Bengal.[55] It was hung on a single pole projecting before and behind and was borne on the shoulders of three men on each side.

Sukhpal

Palanquin was similar to *doli* in shape excepting the size which was bigger.[56] In Bengal the rich used *sukhasan* or *sukhpal*, a crescent-shaped litter covered with camlet or scarlet cloth and the like, the two sides of which had fastenings of various metals.[57] Abul Fazl calls *sukhasan* as a "boat of dry land".[58] It was conveniently adapted for sitting in, lying at full length or sleeping on during travel.[59]

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[49] *Ain*, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-44.

[50] See Hobson Jobson, p. 503 ; also see Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

[51] *Ibid.* ; Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] For a contemporary painting refer to Plate XLII, *Storia*, Vol. IV, facing page 122 ; also see Petermundy, II, p. 192.

[54] Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 72 ; also see H. H. Das, *Norris' Embassy to Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 1909, p. 162.

[55] T. K. Raychaudhuri, *Bengal under Akbar and Jahangir*, 1953, p. 192.

Chandol

Chandol was perhaps the most luxurious litter. It was closed and covered like the room of a house ; the windows were adorned with gilded leather or silk hangings ; the mattresses were made of silk. Sometime they spread a tiger skin on the floor.[60] Some decorated them with plates of carved silver while others had them painted with flowers and other curiosities or set round with gilt balls.[61] There also hung in the palanquin a beautiful vessel containing drinking water.

This litter had two beautifully decorated poles projecting before and behind and was borne on the shoulders of 12 persons, 3 persons at each pole, i.e., 6 persons on each side.[62] The following is a poet's somewhat exaggerated description of a richly furnished palanquin of a noble, raja or a rich merchant : "The handles were made with gold and gems, besprinkled with liquid sandal. The roof of the palanquin was covered with a piece of thick silk. Precious gems decorated its skirts. Peacock feathers were used to adorn the palanquin. The silk tufts around it gave it a dazzling look. The merchant sat on the palanquin on one side and both on his right and on his left his attendants were fanning him with chowries."[63] According to the *Ain*, finely built carriages were called *bahals*.[64] There is a reference to the invention of an extraordinary carriage by Akbar. It was large enough to hold several apartments with a bath-room and was drawn by an elephant.[65]

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[56] *Storia*, Vol. IV, Plate XLI, facing p. 92.

[57] *Ain*, II, Jarrett (1891), p. 122 ; T. K. Raychaudhuri, *op.cit.*, p. 192.

[58] A.N., I, p. 203 ; Tr., I, p. 315.

[59] *Ain*, II, revised Sarkar, p. 134.

[60] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 187.

[61] Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

[62] For a contemporary painting of *Chandol* refer to Plate XXXIX, *Storia*, Vol. IV, facing page 32.

Elephant litters

Sometimes elephants were employed to carry the litter which was suspended between two elephants. In summer the nobles had *khas tatties* (screens made of fragrant *khas* grass) fixed on all its four sides in order to have coolness inside. Petermundy refers to the growing of barley on the outer side of *tatties* to give it a pleasant look.[66] The noble Saif Khan's sister-in-law travelled in this type of litter to Agra to see the Taj Mahal.[67] There are frequent references to the use of camel and elephant litters. Manucci's *Storia Do Mogor* has a beautiful painting showing a litter fitted on the back of a camel by means of ropes. Petermundy describes *imari* (Petermundy *ambarre*) or elephant litter as a "little coach made fast with strong *ghirsees* (*ghirnee* or pulley) and ropes on the elephant's back standing on pack saddles, or things of puapose, at least a foot above his china which is a great height from the ground." These litters used by the king and the nobles were highly decorated and ornamented with all sorts of silk stuffs and jewellery. The curious reader may make a reference to Manucci's *Storia*[68]

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[63] T. C. Das Gupta, *Aspects of Bengali Society from Old Bengali Literature*, Calcutta, 1935, pp. 301-2.

[64] *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 275.

[65] *Ibid*.

[66] Petermundy, II, p. 191.

[67] *Ibid*, p. 190 ; for a contemporary painting refer to *Storia*, Vol. II, Plate XL, facing page 62.

[68] *Storia*, Vol. I, pp. 112, 158 etc ; also see Lalit Kala Akademi, Miniatures, Paintings of Sri Moti Chand Khajanchi Collection, Plate 68.

Do Mogor for having an idea about the fine kind of *howdahs* used by the Mughal emperors.

Ships and boats

Ships and boats were the principal means of water transport. The Ganges, the Yamuna and the Indus rivers were mainly employed near the coastal regions. There was a fleet of 300 to 400 sea-going ships plying between Cambay and Goa and another of 250 sailing from Goa to the South, besides numerous ships plying on the eastern coast of Bengal and Orissa.[69] Mandelslo's view that some of the largest ships could carry 1,000 persons seems to be exaggerated. Hamilton is more reasonable when he says that the "largest of the ships could accommodate 200 persons.[70] Each ship had a number of cabins, which were hired out to passengers. A lock and a *kishti* (boat) were provided with each cabin. The lower part of a ship was constructed with triple planks so that it could withstand the tempests. Some of the ships were built in compartments. If one part was damaged, the other parts enabled the ship to continue the journey.[71] Manucci is full of praise for the Indian ships which, according to the traveller, lasted much longer than those built in Europe.[72] Indians were quick to learn the British technique of building ships and quickly adopted it.[73] The ship-building centres in India were at Allahabad, Lahore, Multan, Kashmir and many places on the West Coast.[74]

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[69] Balakrishna, *Commercial Relations between England and India (1600-1757)*, pp. 279-81. Also see Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar*, p. 171 ; Tavernier, I, p. 128 ; II, pp. 266-67 ; *Voyages of Pyrard De Laval*, p. 182 ; Commissiart's *History of Gujarat*, p. 534.

[70] Hamilton, I, p. 124.

[71] Major, *India*, p. 27 ; Varthema, p. 154 quoted in T. V. Mahalingham, *Economic Life in Vijayanagar*, 1954, p. 146.

[72] *Storia*, I, p. 162. Also see Hamilton, I, p. 236.

[73] Ovington, p. 280.

[74] *Chahar Gulshan*, p. 40.

Boats and rafts were used as a means of conveyance on the rivers. Akbar travelled in a boat from Agra to Allahabad. There is also a reference to Akbar's journey from Delhi to Agra by boat.[75] In Bengal travelling was by boats especially during the rainy season. They built different kinds of boats for purposes of war, carriage and swift sailing.[76] There were in Bengal alone about 4,200 big boats and 4,400 smaller ones, according to *Chahar Gulshan*.[77] Larger boats could even carry an elephant.[78] Boats on the Indus were provided with all amenities of life.[79]

The boats meant for the royalty were highly artistic. Abul Fazl refers to the "wonderfully fashioned boats with delightful quarters and decks and gardens." The stern of the boats was made in the shape of animals so as to amuse and interest spectators.[80] To Humayun goes the credit of inventing *Jasr-i-Rawan* or the moveable bridge. It served both as a bridge and a boat. Several boats were joined together with hooks and iron chains. It was covered with wooden boards and was so firmly fixed with iron nails etc. that passengers on foot and even riders could cross over it. Whenever the King planned a journey by river, the bridge was divided into several parts and steered on the water.[81] Petermundy refers to lighters and gabares at Agra of 300 to 500 tons which were used to transport great men and their families down the river to Allahabad, Patna and even Dacca etc.

In Vijayanagar brigantins or fustas were used for rowing. The people also used harigolus or coracles or round-basket boats covered with hide. These basket boats, framed in cane, were covered with leather outside. They carried 15 to 20 persons. Even horses and oxen could cross in them. In the Tamil districts boats called *parisus* made of wicker and leather were used. In the Coromandel Coast there was in use a type of boat called *masala*. Besides rafts, hollowed trees and canoes were used.[82] The fishermen used *catamarans* (several pieces of wood fastened together in the form of rafts) to sweep the rivers and the seas.

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[75] A. N., II, p. 76 ; Tr., II, p. 118.

[76] *Ain*, Jarrett, II, 1891, p. 122.

[77] *Chahar Gulshan*, Chalterman, p. 40 (MS.)

[78] A. N., I, p. 360 ; Tr., I, p. 364 f.n. 2.

[79] Pinkerton's *Voyages* (Collections) ; Hamilton (1688-1723), Vol. VIII, p. 307.

[80] A. N., III, p. 85 ; Tr., III, p. 120. Also see *Qanoon-i-Humayun*, trans., pp. 42-44.

[81] *Qanoon-i-Humayun*, trans., p. 45.

SECTION II

MODE OF TRAVELLING

Several European travellers have made a special mention of the manner of travelling in Mughal times. The custom required that all the able-bodied *umras* who were "not exempted by a peculiar office" should accompany the King when he moved out on his *takht-i-rawan* or throne which was carried on the shoulders of 8 men. Sometimes, however, as for example, paying a visit to the mosque for prayers, he would dispense with this large retinue and only the *umras* on duty accompanied him.[83]

A noble's procession

It was a pleasure to see a noble going to attend the *darbar*. In his rich palanquin, he would sit cross-legged against a thick cushion of brocade, chewing his betel, sweatening the breath and reddening his lips. Some of them had a hubble-bubble to keep themselves busy. On one side of the palanquin was a *piqdan* or spitoon of procelain or silver ; on the other side, there were two more servants to fan the lord, flap away the flies or brush off the dust with a peacock fan. A few footmen marched in front to clear the way and a soldier on a stately steed followed in the rear.[84]

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[82] Mahalingham, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

[83] Bernier (1891), p. 215.

If a long journey was intended, it was usual to send an advance party 2 days ahead to make necessary arrangements for stay at the first halting stage. The noble's procession was led by elephants and with flags, followed by the measurer of way and contingent of horses. Drum-beaters on elephant's back came next. Trumpets were sounded off and on. Footmen carrying the noble's insignia or flags followed.[85] At night *mishalchis* with their lighted *mishals* (pots filled with oil in an iron hoop and emitting light with a lot of stinking fumes), marched ahead of the palanquin.[86] The noble was seated in a palanquin if the weather was bad, otherwise he rode on the back of a horse or an elephant. He was surrounded by servants some of whom were busy beating away the flies, others carried fans and cold water. The rear was made up of horsemen and foot soldiers who acted as an escort. Their number varied from 200 to 500, according to the status of the noble.[87]

Armed escorts for travellers

It was equally necessary for the merchants and travellers to engage an escort, particularly when they carried some merchandise. These people armed with bows, arrows and muskets were a deterrant to robbers.[88] European travellers lavish high praise on these escorts for their faithfulness to their masters and honest dealings. Their services could be had for Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 per month.[89] Sidi Ali Reis who visited

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[84] Bernier (edition revised by Smith), pp. 213-14.

[85] Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29.

[86] *Travels in India in the 17th Century*, p. 187.

[87] *Roe's Embassy*, p. 298.

[88] Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29.

[89] Terry in *Early Travels* by Foster, p. 314 ; Tavernier, I, Chap. III, p. 29.

India during Humayun's reign refers to a particular tribe called *Bats* who had taken it up as a regular profession.[90]

Princesses' mode of travelling

Bernier has left for us an eye-witness account of the procession of Roshanara Begam. He could not conceive of an "exhibition more grand and imposing." She sat in a beautiful golden *meghdambar* on a Pegu elephant. It was followed by 5 or 6 other elephants, carrying other ladies of the royal household, in equally resplendent *meghdambars*. Surrounding the princess were the chief eunuchs beautifully dressed and finely mounted, each with a wand of his office in his hand. Her female body-guards, Tartars and Kashmiris richly attired, rode their handsome steeds. There were, besides, a large number of eunuchs on horseback and foot-soldiers with canes in their hands to clear the way, and whip away the intruders, if any. These royal princesses were followed by the principal lady of the court, mounted and attended to much in the same manner. Fifteen or sixteen ladies of high rank would thus pass by with "grandeur of appearance, equipage, and retinue more or less proportionate to their rank, pay and office."

Jahanara, however, preferred to travel in a palanquin which was covered with a rich cloth or net of gold sometimes ornamented with precious stones and pieces of looking glass. The eunuchs around it had peacock feathers with handles of enamelled gold work or adorned with precious stones. The palanquin moved very slowly and there were watermen in front who sprinkled water to lay the dust. Scents and perfumes were also kept by near the palanquin. The male attendants with sticks of gold or silver in their hands called out : "Out of the way, out of the way."[91]

No one could dare to cross till the royal procession had passed, otherwise he was sure to be beaten back. Bernier once escaped with his life with great difficulty. It was indeed proverbial that three things were to be carefully avoided, the first being getting among the choice and led horses where kicking abounds, the second, intruding on the hunting ground, and the third, a too near approach to the ladies of the seraglio.[92]

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[90] *Travels of Sidi Ali Reis*, p. 351.

[91] *Storia*, I, pp. 220-21.

If by chance, any noble with his retinue was met on the road, he would dismount and stand aside with his hands crossed till the palanquin of the prince or princess came close ; he would then respectfully bow and depart. It was customary in Mughal times for a person of junior rank to show the same civility to his superiors. Sometimes even the Emperor and the princes alighted from their palanquins as a mark of respect to devout persons and waited deferentially till their carriage had passed by.[93] Sometimes the King or the prince would send a gift of several pieces of betel in a gold brocade bag ornamented with precious stones—as a mark of honour to the awaiting noble.[94]

Procession of an ambassador

An accredited ambassador's procession to the court of the Great Mughal to present his credentials and have an audience with the King was equally picturesque. William Norris'[95] procession included state horses richly caparisoned, trumpeters, state palanquins, peons, lancers, players on hautboys, kettle-drums and bagpipes, musketeers and archers in due order. These were followed by a person of rank carrying a naked sword and liveried servants on horse-back. The sword of state was carried before the palanquin carrying the distinguished ambassador. As many as 30 peons followed, bearing silver lance and swords with scarlet scabbards. Close to this palanquin, on the left hand side, was carried a shield emblazoned with the King's arms. There were in attendance two chief peons carrying silver-gilt fanning feathers. Behind them were members of the embassy seated in coaches. Some gentlemen were on horseback.[96]

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[92] Bernier (1891), pp. 373-74. In Persia, according to the traveller, things were much worse.

[93] H. H. Das, *Norris' Embassy to Aurangzeb*, p. 207.

[94] *Storia*, I, pp. 220-21.

[95] Ambassador of King William III of England to the Court of Aurangzeb.

SECTION III

POSTAL SYSTEM

General

The Indian postal system during medieval times did not cater to the needs of the common man. There was no regular provision for the carrying of public mail. But there were excellent arrangements, as Le Bon puts it in his *Civilization of India*, for carrying the King's mail. Letters and information reached them quickly and properly. Ibn Batuta describes in detail the postal system as it prevailed in or about 1324 A.D. There were 2 kinds of couriers, horse and foot, posted at regular intervals. Foot couriers carried a whip in their hands about 2 cubits long and small bells on their head.[97] Nizam-ud-din, author of the *Tabqat*, praises the postal system of Sikandar Lodi.[98] The King received daily the report of prices and occurrences in *parganas* of his dominions.[99] Babar tried to improve upon it and ordered a tower to be built at every 9th *kuroh*. At every 18th *kuroh* (13 or 14 miles) were to be kept ready 6 post horses for carrying the mail.[100] Its maintenance expenses were to be borne by the master of the neighbouring *pargana*. To facilitate communications Babar also ordered a road to be built from Agra to Kabul.[101]

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[96] H. H. Das, *Norris' Embassy*, p. 206.

[97] S. Lee, *Travels of Ibn Batuta*, pp. 101-2.

[98] The institution of *dak chaukis* is, however, attributed to Ala-ud-din Khalji. Whenever he sent an army or an expedition, it was the Emperor's custom to establish posts on the road and at every post relays of horses were stationed. At every half or quarter *kos* runners were posted, and officers and report writers were appointed. The King would thus receive the news of his army's march daily or after 2 or 3 days. *Tarikh-i-Firoze Shahi*, E. & D., Vol. III, p. 203.

[99] T. A., I, pp. 337-38.

Dak-chaukis

Sher Shah's *serais* were also the stations of *dak-chaukis* (mail stages). Two government horses were kept ready in each serai for carrying of persons and despatches. By *dak-chaukis* news reached him every day from Nilab and the extremity of Bengal.[102] Akbar improved upon Sher Shah's system and established throughout his dominions 2 horses and several Mewars at every 5th *kuroh*. They were employed to convey letters from and to court. Whenever a royal *farman* or a letter from a nobleman reached a *chauki*, it was immediately conveyed to the next *chauki* by a rider. According to Ferishta 50 *kurohs* were thus covered in 24 hours. A letter reached Ahmedabad and Gujarat, a distance of about 500 miles, in 5 days.[103]

Runners under Akbar and Jahangir

Akbar had in his employment for an emergency 4,000 runners, some of whom would cover a distance of 700 miles in 10 days.[104] Pelsaert was surprised at the incredible speed with which the royal letters were transmitted during Jahangir's time. Runners had been posted in the villages 4 or 5 *kuroh*[105] apart and they took their turn of duty day and night. As soon as a letter was delivered, he would run with it and hand it over to another messenger at the next *chauki* who would deliver it to the next one and so on. According to Tavernier, it was thought inauspicious to hand over the letters. In fact, they were thrown at the feet of the runner who would run with them to the next stage.[106] The letters thus travelled day and night at the speed of about 80 *kos* in 24 hours and reached their destinations.[107] It is no wonder, then, that melons and oranges from Karez and Bengal, situated at a distance of 1,400 and 1,000 miles respectively, were received in Delhi quite fresh.[108]

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[100] B. N. (Bev.), II, pp. 629-30.

[101] Also see *ibid.*, p. 626.

[102] Ferishta, p. 228, quoted by Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 392.

[103] Ferishta, Briggs, Vol. II.

[104] Ferishta, I, p. 272.

[105] According to Hamilton at every 10th mile. *A New Account of East Indies*, Vol. I, p. 150.

Aurangzeb issued strict orders that postal runners were to cover one *jaribi*[109] *kuroh* in one *ghari*. If a runner failed to cover the appointed distance or reached the destination late, he was fined. The fine amounted to 1/4th of his salary. It took 12 days for a runner to reach Delhi from Ahmedabad. In an emergency, however, the distance was covered in a week. The local zamindars, *faujdars* and police officials were responsible for the safety of these runners. Each province had a large number of these posts or *dak-chaukis*. For example, there were 20 *dak-chaukis* between Ahmedabad and Ajmer and 62 runners ;[110] between Ahmedabad and Bharoach, there were 16 posts and 35 runners.[111]

Pigeons as letter-carriers

The Mughals did not practise the ancient custom of sending letters through pigeons on any large scale. However, there is a reference in the *Ain* to a special variety of pigeon known as the 'rath pigeons' which were trained to carry letters from a great distance.[112] Jahangir observes that they would deliver messages from Mandu (Malwa) to Burhanpore normally in 3 hours. But if the weather was bad, they took 5 to 6 hours.[113] Quli Ali of Bukhara, Masti of Samarqand, Mullazada, Sikandar Chela, Haji Qasim of Balkh, Abdul Latif of Bukhara, Habib of Shiraz were some of the famous pigeon trainers during Akbar's time.[114]

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[106] Tavernier, p. 100.

[107] *Jahangir's India*, p. 58.

[108] *Tuzuk*, pp. 173-74, 211.

[109] One *jaribi* equalled 25 *dhara* and one *dhara* amounted to 42 fingers.

[110] The total pay of the runners between these *chaukis* amounted to Rs. 255.

[111] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* (Bombay Edition), Vol. II, pp. 117-18 quoted in *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XVII (1944).

Pigeons were also employed by the nobles to bring them the news of the King's arrival at the Public Hall. While the noble kept himself in readiness at home, a servant with two pigeons of different colours, awaited at the Hall. As soon as the King left his palace, he would release a pigeon of a particular colour, thus conveying the news to his master.[115]

The Central Government was kept informed of happenings in different parts of the country by the following agencies :

Public reporters

The *waqai-navis* : He was a public reporter, appointed by the Central Government in each province to report to the Emperor the occurrences of those places. He received reports from his agents appointed in the various *parganas* and incorporated what he thought suitable in the weekly provincial newsletter. He had his clerks appointed in the office of the *subehdar*, *diwan*, *faujdar*, *kotwal* etc. The contents of his letters were communicated to the *subehdar*, and if he was posted to a field army, to the general in command, before they were sent to the Emperor.

Secret reporters

Sawanih Nigar or *Khufia-navis* (a secret news-writer) reported matters to the Emperor without any knowledge of the provincial authorities. They resided and worked secretly in the *subhas* and sent their reports.

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[112] *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 314.

[113] *Tuzuk* (Lucknow Edition), p. 192.

[114] *Ain* (Bloch), p. 302.

[115] *Storia*, II, p. 407.

Spies

Harkarah, literally carrier of news, was in fact a spy who kept his agents in the office of the local authorities like *waqai-navis* and *Sawanih nigar*. The *harkarah* reported the news to the governor of the *subha* and also sent closed envelops to the court.

Waqai was sent once a week, *sawanih* twice and the *akhbar* of *harkarahs* once a month. All these news-reporters worked under the direction of *Darogah-i-dak-Chauki* or Superintendent of Posts and Intelligence. All reports were received by him and handed over to the *Wazir* unopened for submission to the Emperor.[116]

Classes of official letters

There were the following classes of official letters : *farman*, *shukka*, *ahkam*, any letter addressed by the Emperor directly to any other person, subject, prince, contemporary sovereign was included in this category ; *nishan*, a letter addressed by a prince to anyone except the Emperor ; *arzdasht*, a letter from any subject to the Emperor or a prince and also from a prince to the Emperor ; *hash-ul-hukm*, a letter written by a minister under the directions of the Emperor ; *ahkam* and *namz*, notes and points dictated by the Emperor as material for official letters to be later on drafted in the conventional style ; *sanad*, a letter of appointment ; *parwanah*, an administrative order or ruling to a subordinate official, usually the result of a suit at court ; *dastak*, a short official pass or permit for transit of goods ; and *ruqqa*, a private letter.[117]

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[116] *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Sup. 185, *Baharistan-i-Ghaibi* (Paris MS 101a); *Alamgirnama*, 1081, quoted in Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, pp. 71-75.

[117] Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, pp. 233-34.

The royal *farmans*, written in a large and beautiful hand on paper sprinkled with gold dust, were sealed and rolled up and put in a bag of cloth of gold, the mouth of which was tied with coloured strings and sealed with wax with seals of the *Wazir*. Such bags were called *khiratas*.[118]

Letters abroad

Special measures were adopted for the security of the letters sent abroad to the Emperors or principal ministers. Letters were enclosed in a large hollow cylinder of bamboo, with an opening at one end and about 2 inches long. After putting in the letter, this opening was sealed. Thus the letter was carried neat and clean unaffected by rain or dust.[119]

Royal treasury

The royal treasury was transmitted to the centre from the various states in much the same manner as the mail. Unlike the mail, however, it changed posts on the frontiers of the provinces only. The *Subehdars* received it on the border of his province and carried it to the fort under special supervision. He then loaded the treasury into another carriage and sent it onward under heavy guard.[120] The same practice was followed by all the *Subehdars* till the treasury reached the centre.

Private post

There were no regular arrangements for private post. It was either entrusted to these agencies or in some cases despatched through special messengers. Hawkins refers to the news sent by the merchants of Goa about the arrival of English ships at the port. Three days after, news came of their arrival at Surat.[121] Badauni refers to a regular correspondence and even exchange of gifts between him and his friend Yaqub of Kashmir.[122] The rich people and merchants had their own special messengers. With a plume on their head and bells fixed to the belt, they would run at a steady pace. To avoid fatigue, they took large quantities of opium.[123] Laymen utilised the services of a touring acquaintance to send letters to their friends or relatives in the areas he was likely to visit.

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[118] *Ain*, I (1873), p. 264, Purchas, IX, 50 ; Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, pp. 235-36.

[119] Ovington, p. 250.

[120] *Riyad-us-Salatin* (Cal. ed.), p. 257. The royal treasury was shifted to Agra from Delhi on 1,400 *Irabas* or carriages drawn by bullocks in the 9th year of Aurangzeb's reign. S. M., Latif, *Agra, Historical and Descriptive*, p. 42.

Despatch of money

A layman despatched money to distant places through shroffs who were scrupulously honest in their dealings. He would hand over the amount to the shroff who wrote on a slip of paper in Hindi, without any seal or envelope, instructions to their agents who worked in different parts of the country. This paper was called *hundi.* On showing it, payment was at once made by the agent without any argument or hesitation. Sometimes a person would sell the *hundi* at a small discount. The purchaser would himself get the amount from the proper place.[124] The traders would also sometimes place their goods at the disposal of the shroffs who would arrange to send them to their destination safely on some payment.

Serais

Our study of the means of communication during medieval time would not be complete without a reference to the serais or resting houses. They were, in fact, means for postal communication and a halting stage for weary travellers.[125] "These serais," to quote Dr. Qanungo, "were the veritable arteries of the Empire, diffusing a new life among its hitherto benumbed limbs."[126] European travellers pay handsome tributes to the Mughal emperors for the construction and maintenance of serais throughout the length and breadth of the empire.[127] Some philanthropists also built serais as an act of charity.[128] Akbar had given orders for the building of serais throughout his dominions.[129] *Ain* corroborates it.[130] Nicholas Withington who visited India during Jahangir's time found a serai or a place of lodging at every 10 *kos*. There were arrangements for cooking and provisions for cattle.[131] The Emperor gave orders for the construction of a milestone at each *kos* and the sinking of a well at every third mile.[132] He was very particular that a serai or a mosque be built near all those roads which had been the scene of thefts and robberies.[133] Manucci, during Aurangzeb's time, saw these serais on almost every route. But they seemed to have been greatly neglected, for Norris found them "dirty and nasty, fit for nobody but carters and camel drivers." Bernier too is critical of these serais where "men, women and animals were all housed together."[134] Manucci, however, admires some of the big serais which were like "fortified palaces with their bastions and strong gates." They were made of stone or of brick. Mandelslo praises the serais built at Agra where excellent arrangements had been made for the stay and safety of the belongings.[135] Some of these serais were spacious enough to accommodate as many as 1,000 persons, camels and carriages. There were separate quarters for men and women.[136] But perhaps the best serai was that of Begam Sahiba built at Delhi by Jahanara, the eldest daughter of Shahjahan.[137] Bernier compared it to Palace Royale at Paris.[138] It had upper chambers, lovely gardens and ornamented reservoirs.[139] In this serai stayed mostly rich merchants from foreign countries with their merchandise from Persia, Uzbekistan, etc., in complete safety.[140] Each serai was under the charge of an official who would close the gates at sunset calling upon everyone to check his belongings. Before opening the gates next morning, he would again request the inmates to take care of their property. Gates were opened only after everyone had satisfied himself about his things. If anything was reported missing, gates were kept closed and a thorough search was ordered and the thieves caught red-handed.[141]

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[121] Hawkins' *Voyages*, Hak. Soc. 1877, pp. 81, 94.

[122] Badauni (MS.), pp. 44-45.

[123] Pelsaert's *Jahangir's India*, p. 62.

[124] See *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh.* Also see Tavernier's *Travels in India*, ed. by Ball, Vol. I, pp. 36-37 ; William Foster, *The English Factories in India (1637-1641)*, p. 84.

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[125] De Laet, p. 55.

[126] Qanungo, *Sher Shah*, p. 392.

[127] Foster, *Early Travels*, p. 311 ; Mandelslo, p. 65 ; Ovington, p. 312 ; William Hawkins in *Early Travels* p. 144 ; *Storia*, I, p. 116 ; *The Voyage of M. Joseph Salbancke through India, Persia, part of Turkie, the Persian Gulf and Arabia* ; Purchas' *His Pilgrims*, Vol. 3, p. 262.

[128] Thevenot, Chapt. xxxv.

[129] A.N., III, p. 262 ; Tr., III, p. 381. Also see *Storia*, I, p. 116.

[130] *Ain*, I (Bloch), p. 232.

[131] *Early Travels*, *op. cit.*, p. 225. Also Finch in *ibid* p. 179.

[132] *Iqbalnama-i-Jahangiri* (Urdu), p. 88.

[133] *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* (Lowe), p. 6.

[134] Bernier, p. 235.

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[135] Mandelslo, p. 35.

[136] *Storia*, I, p. 68.

[137] It was razed to the ground after the Mutiny.

[138] Bernier, p. 28.

[139] *Storia*, II, p. 83.

[140] Bernier, p. 28.

[141] *Storia*, I, p. 68.

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GLOSSARY

Amir : literally Lord, used as both name and title to denote a member of the Mughal official nobility.

Ayur-Veda : 'The Veda of Life'. A work on medicine, attributed to Dhanwantari, and sometimes regarded as a supplement to the *Atharva-Veda*.

Azan : the Muslim call to prayers.

Baradari : (from Barah, twelve and dar, a door) A summer house, a summer palace (having twelve, i.e., many doors and windows).

Burqa : a Muhammadan female costume covering the whole body from head to foot but provided with eye-holes.

Chajja : a covered way, caves (of a house), portico etc.

Chaupal : a shed in which the village community assemble for public business. A raised platform near a house, a *chabutra*.

Chicks or *Chik* : a kind of screen, usually made of split bamboos loosely fastened together in parallel lines by perpendicular strings and painted.

Chowries or *fly whisks* : the bushy tail of the Tibetan Yak or similar animal often set in a costly decorated handle to use as a fly-flapper, in which form it was one of the insignia of ancient Asiatic royalty.

Cowries : the small shell, cypraea moneta, current as money in India, in fact in South Asia and Africa. Col. Henry Yule mentioned 5120 *cowries* to a rupee.

Dam : the dam, paisa or fulus was a marine copper coin, weighing normally 323·5 grains or 21 grams. Forty dams were reckoned as equivalent to the silver rupee of 172·5 grains.

Damri : a coin of the value of $3\frac{1}{8}$ or $3\frac{1}{4}$ dams or from 8 to 12 cowries.

Darbari : courtier, a regular class during Mughal times.

Darvesh : a Muhammadan religious mendicant.

Diwan-Khana : lit. the court or office of the Diwan, a hall of audience. Drawing room.

Fakir : from Arab *Fakir* (poor). Any poor or indigent person. The most general application is a Muslim religious mendicant who wanders about the country and subsists on alms.

Fatiha : the first sura or chapter of the Quran, which is read for a deceased person on many days after his death, accompanied by alms and distribution of food ; prayers offered up in the name of saints etc.

Hamam : a Turkish bath.

Harkarah : carrier of news—a messenger, courier, an emissary.

Howdah : a great chair or framed seat carried by a elephant.

Hukka : from Arab *Hukkah Hubbla-Bubbla*. Tobacco or a mixture containing tobacco among other things is placed with embers in a terra-cota *chilum* (casket) from which a reed carries the smoke into a coconut shell, half full of water, and the smoke is drawn through a hole in the side generally without any kind of mouth juice, making a bubbling or gurgling sound.

Khilat : a dress of honour, any article of costume presented by the ruling or superior authority to a junior as a mark of distinction ; a complete *khilat* may include arms, or a horse or an elephant.

Khwabgah : Bed room.

Kos : a measure of distance varying in different parts of India, from one to two miles, but most usually about the latter.

Mandapa : an open hall, a temporary building or shed (adorned with flowers and erected on festive occasions such as marriages etc.), a pavilion, an arbour.

Mansibdar : holder of an official appointment or *mansib*. A member of the official Mughal nobility.

Mantra : That part of the Veda which comprises the humns—a passage of the Vedas, a holy text, a formula sacred to any particular deity, a mystical work, a magical formula, an incantation, a charm, a spell, the instruction or formula imparted by a religious teacher.

Maulvi : a learned man, a teacher especially of Arabic.

Mendhi : a plant from the leaves of which a red dye is prepared, with which the natives, women epecially, stain the palms of their hands and soles of their feet and the tips of their fingers.

Mohalla : a quarter of a city, or town, ward, parish.

Muhur : a seal, ring, a gold coin of the value in account of 16 rupees.

Mutah : a temporary marriage, according to *Shia* laws.

Nazar : a present, an offering specially one from an inferior to a superior, to a holy man or to a prince, a present in general.

Nikah : marriage, legal marriage.

Purohit : a family priest, who conducts the domestic ceremonies in a Hindu family or caste.

Raja : a king, a prince.

Sannyasi : a Hindu who has renounced the world, a general term for a religious ascetic.

Sastra : 'a rule book, treatise'. Any book of divine or recognised authority, but more especially the law-books.

Sijdah : prostration, kneeling and touching the ground with the forehead, the eyes being directed to the top of the nose.

Sraddha : a kind of funeral rite or ceremony in honour of the departed spirits of deceased relatives observed at various fixed periods and on occasions of rejoicing, as well as mourning (it consists of offering with water and fire to the gods and manes and of food and gifts to the relatives present and to the Brahmans assisting and is believed essential to the ascent of departed spirits to a world appropriated to the masses, and their residence there.)

Tah Khana : cellar, vault, underground apartments built as to be impervious to the sun. Used as a resting place during summer noons.

Taslim : a form of salutation in which the person placed the back of his right hand on the ground, raised it slowly till he stood erect when he put the palm of his hand on the top of his head.

Ulema : learned persons.

Umra : a collective word applied to the higher rank of the Mughal nobility.

Upanayana : the solemn investiture of youths of the first three castes, Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaishya, with a particular thread or cord worn over the left shoulders.

Vakil : agent, the office of substitute.

Varna : a tribe, a class, a caste.

Yogi : a Hindu ascetic, and sometimes a conjuror. From Sanskrit *Yogin*, one who practises the *Yoga*, a system of meditation, combined with austerities which is supposed to induce miraculous power over elementary matter.

Zakat : alms, contributions of a portion of property obligatory on every Muhammadan possessed of capital, the proportion is a tenth but it may be increased to any amount. For details, see Hughes, Zakat Dictionary of Islam Art.

Zamindar : an occupant of land, a landholder.

Zenana : Pers. Zanana from Zan, woman, the apartments of a house in which the women of the family are secluded. This Muhammadan custom was adopted by Hindus of Bengal and the Marathas.

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